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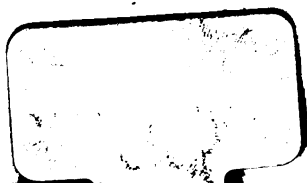
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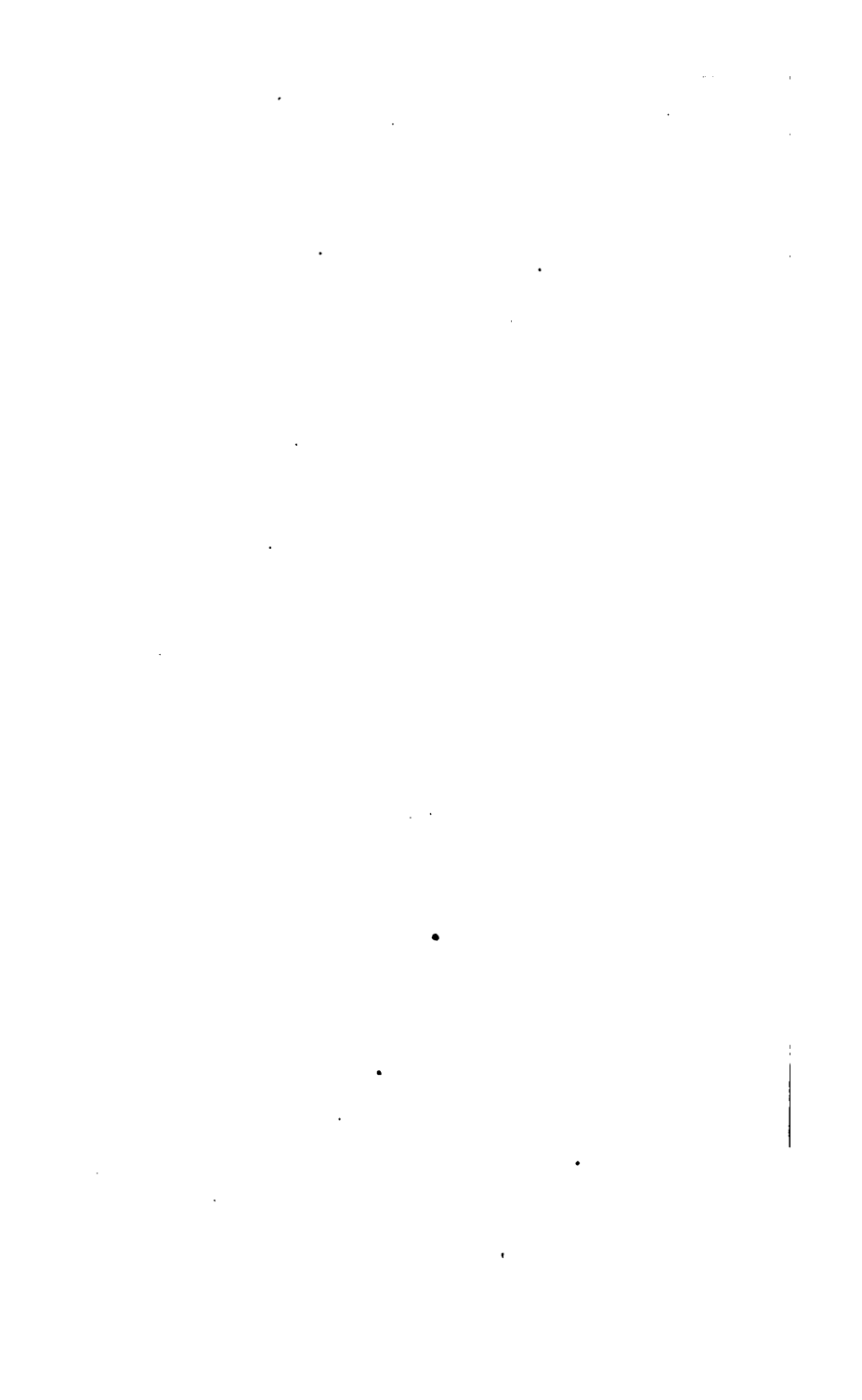
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THE
CHRISTIAN
FAMILY'S ASSISTANT;

CONTAINING

A DISCOURSE ON PRAYER IN GENERAL;

ALSO SUITABLE

FORMS OF PRAYER

FOR

Domestic Worship;

HYMNS ADAPTED TO FAMILY DEVOTION;

AND A SERIES OF

ESSAYS ON DIFFERENT SUBJECTS.

BY THE REV. H. L. POPPEWELL.

— "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—*Joshua.*

◆
THE THIRD EDITION.

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280.



[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

PREFACE.

SUCH a work as the following needs no other apology for its appearing in the world, than an appeal to the times in which we live. It must obviously appear, that there never was a greater disproportion between the profession and the practice of religion, than there is at the present period. That, in a land distinguished, preserved, and blessed like Britain, and in days in which attendance on the public means of grace is become more general than at any former periods, the exercise of Family Religion should be less common, is matter both of surprise and lamentation.

Family worship, which was a part of primitive discipline,* has so sunk into disuse, as to have become, generally speaking, a novelty, if not a subject of ridicule and derision. To say the least, it is sadly neglected among professing Christians. With a few solitary exceptions, what master of a family now calls the members of his establishment with the dawn or close of the day, for the devout and improving exercises of domestic worship? Rare indeed is that

* Mr. Neal, in his history, tells us, that during the time the Non-conformists were in power, the Lord's day was observed with the greatest strictness; all public houses were shut up; there was no traveller in the road, nor walker in the fields, except in case of absolute necessity. Reading the Scriptures, repeating sermons, family prayer, and singing of psalms, were so universal in the city of London, that you might walk the streets on the Lord's day evening, without seeing an idle person, or hear any thing but the voice of prayer and praise from churches and private houses. Vol. ii. p. 591. The great Mr. Howe (perhaps alluding to the same happy period) says, "O what a lovely example was London to the rest of the Christian

householder, who condescends to lead and inspire, by offices like these, the pious concerns of his little community; and to bind himself and them in one common vow,—
“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

To remedy this evil, and to prevent, or at least to counteract, this injurious and sinful neglect, the author would be glad in any measure to contribute.*

world, when religion and the order of families were more generally kept up in it! Such a lustre in this respect did hardly shine upon any spot on earth, as did upon this city.”

* Family worship has ever been considered, by wise and good men, as a matter of vast importance, and the neglect of it as one of the greatest evils to be deplored. Hence the efforts that have in different ages been made, to revive and encourage the performance of it in our own country. In the year 1693, a Resolution was entered into by the London ministers, the effect of which was to dispose several heads of families to set up religious exercises in them. The following

Numerous as are the books of devotion, and various as are the plans on which they

passage is quoted from the first of six Sermons on Family Religion and worship, by the Rev. John Howe, M.A. "It hath been an unanimous resolution among the ministers of indulged congregations in and about this city, to insist upon family worship even all at once, at least as many as to whom it was possible; and to begin it upon this very day, as I doubt not they generally do: and I should as little doubt the approbation and concurrence of divers other reverend persons in the ministry, who are not of that character, if there had been the same opportunity of consulting them, and of knowing their sense; that is, of as many as do seriously desire and covet to see the prosperous and flourishing state of serious, vital, and spiritual religion and goodness in our days: but they who could confer and agree to concur in such an endeavour as this, have done it with all the cheerfulness and unanimity that could be thought."

Dr. Evans, in his Preface to the above Sermons, says, "Another effort was made lately with as general concurrence, by our ministers in this city, on November 20, 1720, to enforce the same needful practice." At a more recent meeting of ministers of the Independent denomination, it was resolved, 1st. That the

are written, few, if any, are free from those deficiencies which are a just ground of complaint. By far the greater part of those of recent date, as well as others of longer standing, consist of prayer *only*, and those *all* composed by the *same* authors. These circumstances have contributed to render them

ministers in this connection intend, by divine permission, to preach to their several congregations on the first Lord's day in January, 1810, on the important subject of family worship. 2. Resolved, It having been moved and seconded by ministers from the country, present at the said meeting, That it be recommended to their brethren in the country to pursue the same measure on the same day.

In the year 1812, an Address on Family Religion was drawn up, and printed by order of the associated Synod of Edinburgh, and recommended from the pulpit by their respective ministers. The associated Synod being met, the Address was presented to the congregations under the inspection of this Synod, prepared by the Committee appointed for that purpose. The Synod unanimously approved of it, and ordered it to be printed, and read from the pulpit by all the ministers of the Synod, and afterwards to be published.

less interesting than they would have been, had a variety of talent been combined in their composition. Books of mere devotion are often overlooked, especially by the younger branches of a family ; while such as connect other edifying matter, will be more likely to meet with some share of their attention.

Prayer, whether personal or social, is “a reasonable service ;” and next to the performance of it, is the importance of an acquaintance with the nature, reasons, and grounds of this holy exercise ; subjects on which even many good men seem but little informed.

Many prayers intended for the use of families, appear to be addressed rather to man than to God, or, to use good Mr. Newton’s words, “are more like preaching than praying.” They rather express the Lord’s mind, than their own or others to him. “Indeed,” says he, “this can hardly be called prayer. It might in another place, stand for a part

of a good sermon ; but affords but little help to those who desire to pray with their hearts."

In the prayers contained in this volume, care has been taken to provide for the different capacities of those who may use them, and also to avoid that frequent recurrence of the same expressions, which, through the natural drowsiness of the human mind, is often the occasion of cold formality in prayer. The great variety of the methods which different writers must almost necessarily adopt, will, it is hoped, greatly counteract this fault, and tend, under the divine blessing, to warm and enliven the heart, as well as furnish suitable language for the lips.

It may, however, be remarked, that as family devotion admits of less variety than public, so perhaps it requires less. Those who depend on variety of expression for their devotional feelings, show that they have little if any thing more than the *form* of religion, and

are not likely long to retain even that. The necessity of some variety in prayer is evident; because our sins, and wants, and dangers are various in different periods and circumstances of life. The want of this variety is however remedied at a much less expense than what is generally supposed. The prayers used in the established church, though excellent, are justly charged with sameness, but might be easily freed from that charge, if, with a few additional prayers, they were made into four services instead of two. A great variety in a multiplied number of prayers, is perhaps, as great an evil, as a paucity of them. That those who join in the worship should be able to form some idea of what is next to be uttered, is, I conceive, rather an advantage than otherwise. If our different circumstances require variety, because they are various; yet a whole volume expressing supplication in varied forms, for the same things, is deemed, at least, unnecessary.

By uniting the peculiar excellencies of

different devotional writers, a more edifying and interesting, and yet less expensive variety is provided, than the prayers of any one writer, how numerous soever, could have furnished. Indeed, such an assemblage of devotional petitions, breathing the same sentiments and feelings, renders the degree of sameness which may attend them, a pleasing demonstration that real religion is *the same* in every heart that is possessed of it.*

* It has often been objected against forms of prayer, that it is scarcely possible to bring them to suit the state of the heart, and the particular wants of individuals. But it is much more difficult to bring the heart to suit the expressions contained in a Scriptural form; and this appears to be by far the most important object of Christian pursuit. We cannot surely be doing wrong in confessing the sins, and imploring the mercies which saints of old confessed and implored; and if our repentance for the one, and desires for the other, do not correspond with theirs, we have the more need to pray that they may.

I heartily wish that some, yea, all of our senior brethren would condescend to consult forms of prayer

In the following work, imperfect as it may be, the author's great object has been to promote the spiritual edification of his fellow-creatures ; and thus to advance the knowledge, worship, and honour of God in the world. These considerations induced him to form the design which he has now accomplished. Many respectable ministers of the Gospel with whom he has long had the honour of being acquainted, have expressed their approbation of the plan, and no doubt, could have executed it far better than he ; but, as no book has appeared exactly calculated, in his

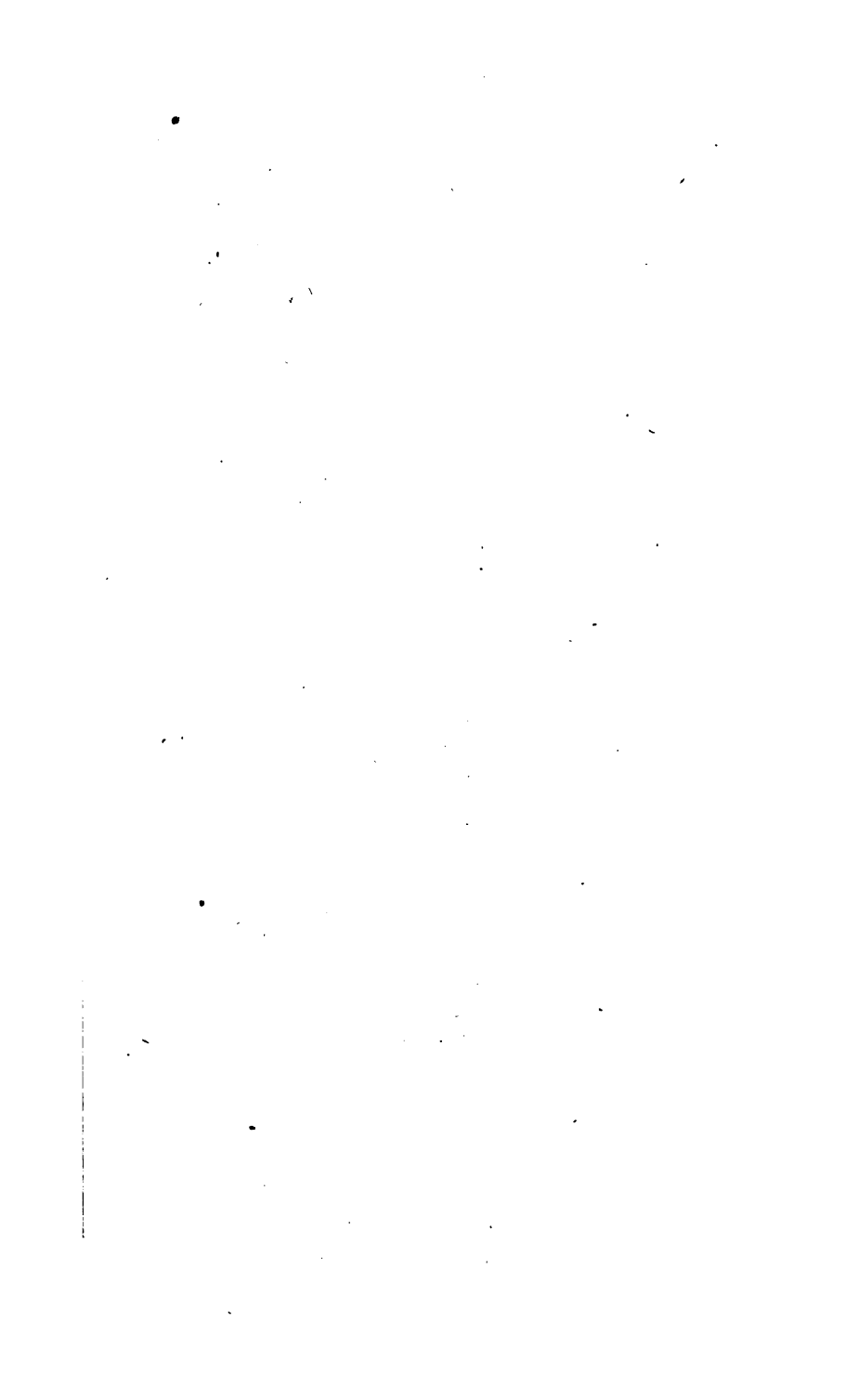
a little more than at present some of them appear to have done. It would most probably prevent unnecessary exposure of a bad education, as well as free their friends from some painful feeling on their account.

It should further be considered that scriptural forms of prayer are often exceeding useful to pious persons; for instruction in the most proper and edifying method of offering up their desires to God, although they may not need them as forms, and this is a principal design of them.

view, for general benefit, he has not thought proper to desist from the work, which he otherwise would have done.

What men will think, or say, of the present publication, it is not easy to conjecture. He who can see with the eyes of all other men, must needs be wiser than it were prudent for any to pretend to be; but he, who can disregard their unjust censures, is at least a friend to his own peace. To please all is less to be desired than to profit some; and it is a matter of consolation to a good man, that what is by far the most desirable, is in some respects, the easiest to be effected. If this be the object of our pursuit, in connection with the glory of God, we shall not be seriously affected by the supercilious frown of mortals.

3, *West Street, Walworth*, 1829.



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THE
CHRISTIAN FAMILY'S ASSISTANT.

CHAPTER I.

The essential Nature of Prayer.

REAL religion includes a sacred homage of the blessed God, in all those attributes and characters under which he hath revealed himself to his creatures. When we contemplate his all-sufficiency, we are invited to adore him as the fountain of happiness, and to make a full and deliberate choice of him as our supreme good, and everlasting portion. When we take a view of his strict and awful justice, in the character of a moral governor of his creatures, we are obliged to flee by faith to the atoning blood of Christ, through which alone we can hope to meet with him in peace. While contemplating the spotless holiness and purity of the divine nature, we are led to abhor ourselves as polluted creatures, and excited to seek the renovation of our hearts after his blessed image. And when we survey his wisdom and his power, his mercy and his grace, his faithfulness and truth, we are encouraged to repose our "trust and confidence in him, and to pour out our hearts before him."

Prayer, whether personal or social, is a reasonable service; and next in importance to the practice of it, must be an acquaintance with the nature and grounds of this holy exercise. To impart this information, and to promote the right performance of this duty among professing Christians, are the objects of the following Chapters.

The word *Prayer*, in a strict and limited sense, signifies *petition* only; but in its usual latitude of acceptations, it comprehends all sorts of devotion, and contains in it the different subjects in which the mind is employed in its addresses to heaven. The subject of prayer, in this view of it, is very large and copious, and to treat of it in all its bearings, and according to the various relations and circumstances, with which it is connected in Christian experience, and presented to us in the sacred Scriptures, would require a volume of considerable size.

Prayer is of different kinds, is composed of various parts, and bears a relation to the several doctrines of revealed truth. It may be divided into public, social, and private. Its parts are adoration, confession, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. And the doctrines to which prayer is related, are, indeed, almost all contained in the Bible; but especially those of the being and providence of God, original and actual sin, the divinity, atonement, and intercession of Christ, and the agency of the Holy Spirit. The exercise of prayer is also expressive of, and connected with, all the vitals of true religion. Every gracious disposition and affection, which distinguishes a sincere believer from a formal hypocrite,

or from the profane sceptic, is exercised in proportion as the true spirit of prayer is enjoyed ; * and let it be remembered, that the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, is equally necessary to a right performance of this duty, in what external method soever our petitions are presented.

The spirit and essence of Prayer, consists of gracious desires, arising from a perception of the excellency of spiritual blessings, connected with a sense of our need of them. Without these, the best chosen petitions, punctually repeated morning and evening out of a book, or the most fluent addresses, in language of our own conception, are no more than the mimicry of prayer : a sort of devotion, which pride and self-sufficiency can practice, and on which formality and superstition can erect their absurd pretensions to religion ; while the spirit and the truth of prayer are unexperienced and neglected : for as the needy only can stoop to ask the relief of alms, so we can begin to pray, only, when we feel ourselves necessitous creatures ; when we long to receive from God what we beg of him, knowing that upon his compliance, or refusal, depend our present and future happiness. This sensibility of our real wants, both scripture representations and scripture examples, prove essential to true prayer.—“ If thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him ; if

* “ Prayer ” (says Dr. Owen) “ is the only single duty wherein every grace is acted, every sin opposed, every good thing obtained, and the whole of our obedience in every instance of it is concerned.” *Work of the Spirit in Prayer*, p. 126.

thou seek him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, for the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth." (Acts ix. 10, 11; Zech. xii. 10; Deut. iv. 29; Psalm cxlv. 18.) The same feeling of our wants is pointed out by our Lord as essential to prayer, and described by the united terms of asking, seeking, and knocking; terms, the most expressive, of a pungent sense of our need of immediate relief.

The scripture definition of prayer is further illustrated by the practice of the most approved servants of God: they were penetrated with a feeling sense of their spiritual necessities when they came before the throne of grace. "With my whole heart," says one, "have I sought thy favour; at evening and morning, and at noon day will I pray unto thee, and thou shalt hear my voice;" again, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice; O let thine ear be attentive to the voice of my supplication." In the address also of Daniel, the greatly beloved, every syllable breathes a sense of want, which scarcely knew how to bear with denial or delay: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for thy name's sake, O Lord my God." From the Scripture representations of real prayer, it appears plain, that all men naturally stand upon a level with respect to their ability of praying truly. Outward circumstances in this case make no difference; the ignorant clown and the polished scholar; those who have been most piously trained, and those whose education has been miserably neglected; those who have

been restrained from sinful excesses, and those who have plunged the most deeply into them : all remain, without the grace of God, alike incapable of real prayer.*

As soon as the human soul feels itself oppressed by the guilt, the strength, and tyranny of sin, it will, notwithstanding a previous state of the grossest ignorance, the most neglected education, or the most profligate life, flee to God for refuge, and pour itself out in prayer before his throne. On the contrary, if the soul does not feel the guilt and defilement of sin, and the strength of its influence, the united force of the most pious instructions, and the most scrupulous abstinence from vice, cannot, in the smallest degree, contribute to create the spirit of prayer. These advantages in many instances, instead of producing any just sensibility of the guilt of sin, or of its consequences, unless pardoned and subdued, lead the soul blindly astray with their specious appearances, and thus contribute to render the delusion still more fatal. Indeed, wherever we en-

* It may here be objected, that there is in the minds of men a natural tendency to fly to some superior being for succour, in danger and distress. This is readily granted ; but it is nevertheless certain, that such is the blindness of all, while in a state of unregeneracy, that they are insensible of their spiritual danger and wants. Men are uniformly represented in Scripture as dead in trespasses and sins ; and, as the naturally dead can know nothing of the wants of the living, so the spiritually dead, must be equally ignorant of their own. This is both their sin and their misery ; "there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." (Rom. iii. 11, 19.)

certain just apprehensions of our sin and wants, they are to be attributed to a cause infinitely higher; they are produced by a firm belief in God's word, declaring the sinfulness of sin, and by a heart humbled, so as to plead guilty to the charge. But this firm belief of God's word, and this conviction of sin, and sense of our wants, are in no instances the fruits of education, much less the effect of learning; they are the inestimable gifts of God: gifts, which are no sooner received, than all impediments to prayer are removed. A sense of want will immediately make the stammering tongue of the most unlearned to speak plain enough in the ears of God. A sense of need will make the heart, which was before too gross to conceive any excellency in the things of God, seek after them with strong cries and lasting importunities.

Prayer then is the offering up of our fervent desires to God, under a pressing sense of our absolute need of his mercies.* Desires, not words, form the essential of prayer, and without these, our prayers are but unmeaning compliments, by which God is mocked and ourselves deceived. As words may be uttered without the spirit of prayer, so holy desires may be exercised without a form of words; and, although it is of great service to ourselves, as well as to others, to express our desires in suitable words,

* In prayer, there is a representation of our will, affections, and desires to him on whom we call; with an expectation of being heard and relieved, by virtue of his infinite divine excellencies. *Dr. Owen on the Glory of Christ*, p. 139.

yet God needs not any information which we can communicate to him. Hence the Psalmist said, "Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee." Such desires and holy emotions, are, indeed, what the Lord principally regards. It must therefore be evident, that the heart must be engaged, or there can be no prayer; without this, the words of the lips, or the bending of the knee are hypocrisy in his sight; while, on the other hand, the most simple expressions may convey the fervent desires of effectual prayer most acceptably before God, "who trieth the hearts and reins."

CHAPTER II.

The Nature of Prayer further considered.—

1st. As an essential part of religious worship. 2dly. As an acknowledgment of our dependence on God. 3dly. As the exercise of faith in his promises ; and 4thly. As a mean of communion with him, and conformity to him.

1st. PRAYER is an essential part of that worship which all creatures owe to God, their creator and benefactor. The very nature of divine worship implies and requires an acknowledgment of what God is in himself, and of what he is to those who worship him. Whether he be adored by angels or by men, for what he is in himself, the worship he receives is the same in its nature ; it differs in the degree of excellency only. But the acknowledgments and confessions which sinful creatures owe, with respect to themselves, differ widely from those of holy and pure spirits. The humility of an angel, and consequently his worship, is very different from that which becomes a fallen depraved creature. The former will fall down before his Maker, and confess his own infinite distance from his perfections ; he will acknowledge himself to be the work of the divine hand, and wholly indebted

to his sovereign goodness for every quality which distinguishes him from meaner creatures. But the latter, in order to exercise a humility becoming his character and condition, must not only acknowledge that he is infinitely beneath God, but that he is also in a state of moral corruption, and that he is consequently below that perfection which originally belonged to man.

The worship therefore, of a fallen creature, must contain confession of sin, and an acknowledgment of deserved punishment, as well as a profession of the sense we entertain of our wants, and thankfulness for the numerous undeserved mercies and blessings which we have received. And as angels are under perpetual obligation to make their acknowledgments to the blessed God, in a way of adoration and praise; so also sinful creatures are required, by solemn and proper acts of worship, to make their's, in a way of prayer and thanksgiving. Had man continued in a state of innocence, and pursued the original ends of his being, he would have felt neither the want of any good, nor the sense of any evil, present or future; having done nothing to forfeit the favour of his Creator, he was sure of the continuance of every thing to make him perfectly happy. There was, therefore, no occasion for supplication, deprecation, or intercession; no praying for the forgiveness of our trespasses against God, when none of these evils were in being: neither would it have been necessary, supposing the increase of mankind in that state, to pray for governors and those in authority, because

the necessity of human government arose out of the sinful and disorderly state of human nature. Men, in a state of innocence and happiness, as far as their nature would have permitted them, would have acted uprightly as the angels, and, like them would have paid to their Maker pure worship and adoration; they would have had no need to confess any sin, to implore any mercy, to seek any blessing; but since man through sin is fallen both in body and mind, into a state of disorder and want, he is consequently under the *necessity* of praying, as well as under obligation to its performance: and it is certainly highly fit and reasonable that we, in our fallen state, knowing that we receive all from God, should by asking of Him, as well as by thanksgiving and praise, acknowledge our sense of dependence. But in the preceding state, thanksgiving and praise appear to have been sufficient acknowledgments of the necessity of relying for support upon the author of our being. Had man continued in his primitive state of holiness, he would have been as the angels, who are always represented in Scripture as praising God, but never as praying to Him. So essential in the sight of God is prayer, really spiritual, that without it, fallen creatures can offer to Him no acceptable worship. Without a feeling sense of our sinfulness, dependence, and wants, our service is like that of the Pharisee in the temple, offered in a spirit of self-sufficiency and pride, which renders any performance, how costly soever it may be, an abomination in his sight. Outward expressions are but the

badges and liveries of service, not the service itself; without a suitable frame of mind, loud prayers are but as the "sounding brass and the tinkling cymbals;" without a mind humble, penitent, and believing, a pharisaical diligence in outward forms is, in the sight of God, no better than hypocrisy, and distinguished in his word by no other title. To have our hearts prepared for divine worship; to exercise our graces; to feel our spiritual wants; and both to desire and expect divine impressions to be made upon us, and divine communications to be imparted to us; these are the ends and objects which we should keep in view in all our attempts to worship God, whether in public or in private.

The worshipping of God is also the most comprehensive idea we can entertain of the service which is due from a creature to his Creator. It is to feel, and to express towards Him, a high veneration and reverential regard, with a supreme love to Him, and an ardent desire in all things to resemble Him, and to give Him glory. Without these, our most exact outward obedience cannot be pleasing in his sight. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Our obligation to this worship, or service, is inferred by the dictate of unprejudiced reason; for not to acknowledge God is in fact to deny Him; and never to pray to Him, nor worship Him at all, is to declare that there is no God to whom we should pray, or whom we should adore. But the voice both of reason and of revelation unite to say,

“all nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, and shall glorify thy name; for thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone.” (Ps. lxxxvi. 9, 10; Ps. lxxv. 1, 2.) “Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed; O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.” (Rev. iii. 17, 18; Ps. x. 17.)

2dly. Prayer may be considered as an acknowledgment of our dependence upon God. We are, as creatures, necessarily dependent on our Creator, who is also our preserver and benefactor. But as fallen creatures, we are the subjects of many wants, which we cannot supply, and exposed to many enemies and dangers, from which we cannot effect our own deliverance. He who is not in some measure sensible of this, cannot be said to pray, how excellent soever may be the expressions which he may utter. Those convictions, desires, and preparations which the Scriptures intimate as essential to render prayer acceptable, admit of various degrees; but without possessing them in some measure, no man is capable of praying aright. True prayer is the natural language of the heart of one who is sensible both of his poverty and dependence. He who prays aright, is feelingly sensible of the sinfulness and weakness of his nature, and knows, that independent of God he has nothing, is nothing. He is convinced that he has not in himself wherewith to support him for a single hour, either in being or well being; for an independent creature is

indeed a contradiction.* Angels, though the most exalted of creatures, are entirely dependent on their Creator, and being perfect, they are sensible of their dependence, and constantly ready to acknowledge it to His glory. Every being besides God is a creature; and without dependence upon Him, would be no creature; for there is no independent being, except the Eternal, who only is of himself, and "of whom are all things."

Nothing is more deeply rooted in our fallen nature, than a spirit of self-sufficiency and independence; and till this fundamental error be corrected, and this hateful pride subdued, no one can perform aright that duty, which of all others is the most expressive of his entire dependence upon God.

3dly. The practice of constant prayer, may be viewed as the effect and exercise of faith in the divine veracity. The command of God is the ground of our duty, but his promises are the warrant of our confidence. Nothing, in the exercise of prayer, is of more importance than faith; nor can there be any external evidence of true reliance upon God, greater than the habitual persevering practice of humble prayer. The promises of God

* "Even the soul of Christ, in a state of innocence and perfection, had so much feeling of its dependence as to seek support, supplies, and comfort from his God and Father, by constant devotion: and can we think to be safe in the midst of so many dangers, to be successful in religion, and bear up against the mighty opposition of our enemies, with a deal of corruption within, in neglect of the same means?"
Bennet's Christian Oratory.

are declarations of his gracious purposes towards his believing people; and hence they are frequently encouraged in the exercise of prayer, that they may be prepared to receive from the hand of divine goodness needful mercies and comforts. Prayer cannot exist without faith, "for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Faith and prayer are so necessarily connected, that they cannot exist apart: none but such as really trust in God, will pour out their hearts before him. The conscience of the wicked may indeed compel him, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty or danger, to cry to God for help; but the Scriptures expressly declare, that his "sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord;" and that "without faith it is impossible to please God." To trust in God is to believe in general the declarations of His word: these are the basis and encouragement of prayer; as it cannot subsist without the support of faith, nor faith without the promises by which God has bound himself to regard the prayers of his people. This word of promise is the only foundation of faith; for he who is divinely instructed in the lessons of grace, and is divested of self-sufficiency, sees no other ground upon which to rest, than the truth and faithfulness of a covenant God; he will renounce all other pleas, and venture on that alone.* He may indeed mention his necessities,

* It is said of Dr. Watts, that his faith in the divine promises was lively and unshaken. Once to a friend, he

but the principal argument of the sinner in pleading with God, is his own promise. And God cannot deny a believer approaching upon that ground, unless he deny himself, which we know he cannot do, for "he abideth faithful." The word of God is himself; it is his will: so that the soul may go with holy boldness to God; for the thing that is promised is already half completed: God may for a while keep us in suspense, but he expects that we should still live on his word until the time of his promise comes. The blessing is already in the hands of Christ, and the believer is as sure of possessing it, as if it were now in his own. "God," says the pious Dr. Horn, on Psalm cxix. 49, "promiseth salvation, before he giveth it, to excite our desire of it, to exercise our faith, to prove our sincerity, and perfect our patience. For these purposes, he seemeth sometimes to have forgotten his word, and to have deserted those whom he has engaged to succour and relieve; in which case he would have us as it were to remind him of his promise, and solicit his gracious performance of it."

This, then, is the confidence that we have in him;

expressed himself thus: 'I remember an aged minister used to say, that the most learned and knowing Christians when they come to die, have only the same plain promises for their support, as the common and unlearned.' I find it is the plain promises of the Gospel, which do not require much labour and pains to understand them, which give the Christian the best support; for I can do nothing now but look into my Bible for some promise to support me, and live upon that."

that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us, and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have (in due time) the petition that we desire of him. All the promises of God are in Christ Jesus yea and amen, to the glory of God by us. "Whatsoever ye ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive." "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." But in order that we may receive those blessings of which we stand in need, and which are contained in any of the promises, we must "ask in faith." This requisition plainly shows that the promises are to be viewed as a general warrant for the pleading of every one who believes in the faithfulness, power, and goodness of the great promiser. For instance, should a poor sinner, sensible of his guilt and danger, take encouragement to plead in the name of Christ, with fervency and perseverance, any of the general invitations or promises of mercy; or, should a distressed believer persist in calling upon God, according to his command and promise, (Psa. l. 15,) each of these supplicants would, in thus praying, exercise his faith, and according to his faith it would be "done unto him." Every general command or exhortation to prayer is therefore an encouragement for all who desire to pray; and what guilt or sin they may have contracted, or in what depth soever of temptation and misery they may be plunged, it says to them, "be of good com-

fort, arise, he calleth for thee." The Scriptures abound with general exhortations, addressed to the vilest transgressors; and when such are so far wrought upon, humbled, and softened, as to pray from their hearts for mercy, grace, and salvation, as the gift of God through Christ, it is not "the sacrifice of the wicked, which is abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright which is his delight."

4thly. Prayer may be considered as a medium of communion with God, and of conformity to him. By the fall of our first parents and our own personal sin, we are at an immense distance from God; like wandering stars, we go further and further from the proper centre of our souls, and the only source of our happiness; and if left to ourselves, we should never return, but perish at an awful distance. But, through the tender mercy of our God, the Sun of Righteousness sends forth the attractive influences of his grace, exciting us to inquire after God our Maker, and determining us, like the miserable prodigal, to arise and go to him in a way of humble confession and prayer. Now, a gracious God, having inspired these desires in the mind of a sinner, and inclined him to approach the throne of grace, is of course ready to receive his requests, and to have mercy on him. (Jer. xxix. 11, 15; Psa. x. 17; Isa. lxxv. 24; Rom. viii. 26, 27; Dan. ix. 20.) Hence he is encouraged, yea commanded, by God himself, to come with humble confidence, "through the blood of Jesus," into his immediate presence,

as unto his reconciled God and Father. To Him he may present his supplications, and, as his circumstances and wants may require, may convert any of the promises into petitions. He who was afar off is brought nigh, and he who was a stranger and an enemy, is reconciled, and become a fellow-citizen of the saints and of the household of God; and the believing sinner having returned to God, walks with him in holy agreement through faith in his Saviour, and is enabled to testify with all real saints, "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Friendship is the foundation of fellowship, and concord of communion. Thus commences between the believer and heaven a happy and blessed intercourse, which is to continue for ever. This holy friendship is, during this life, to be maintained in a way of prayer and thanksgiving: hence the Christian is exhorted in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make known his request unto God, with a promise, that in this holy exercise, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep his heart and mind, through Jesus Christ." And O! how supporting, how consoling is even the thought of having the peace of God to be our companion through all the troubles and dangers of this stormy life! The more closely the Christian walks with God, the more he enjoys of real tranquillity and solid comfort: that Christian who is best acquainted with the happiness of walking in communion with God, enjoys the greatest

degree of the exalted pleasures of religion, and best understands what will be the happiness of the heavenly world.

Communion with God will, even in this life, greatly increase our conformity to him. The truth of this is confirmed by common observation. Assimilation is always a consequence of association with others. There is in man a natural aptness and tendency to imitate those who are his most constant companions. If two persons, very dissimilar in disposition, habits, and manner of expression, were for a few days only to associate together, they would visibly approximate each other. Just so the praying soul, by conversing with God, is assimilated to his likeness. The object of worship will always be in some degree the object of imitation. God is the standard of moral excellence, and by contemplating his perfections, our corruptions are counteracted, his image is instamped upon us, and our minds are raised above their natural level.

Thus the exercise of fervent prayer elevates, strengthens, purifies, comforts, and enriches the believing soul.—They who would be rich in grace, must be much in prayer to God: he will beautify them with the beams of his holiness, as Moses's face shone when he returned from the mount; “beholding in the exercise of faith and prayer, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image from glory to glory.” And herein the work of prayer on earth resembles that of praise in heaven; for which more exalted worship it is, no doubt, intended ultimately to prepare us.

CHAPTER III.

The Importance of Prayer.

THE most noble and most interesting object in the world, is a human being falling prostrate before God, his creator and benefactor. An immortal intelligence is the most sublime production of infinite skill; and when it pays its homage to its glorious author, it is in the noblest exercise of its faculties. It is the glory of a creature to know and acknowledge itself to be such; to feel his absolute dependence, and by constant prayer, to declare his sense of the divine authority and presence, and also his confidence in the veracity of the Almighty. These are at once the honor and happiness of every rational creature. If it be the peculiar dignity of angels to approach the throne, and behold the glory of God, and to render him their exalted praises, it is also the distinguishing excellency of man above meaner creatures, that he is capable of adoring the God that made him, the providence that protects and supplies him, and the grace that saves him. The devotion of a good man, though far less exalted, is still of a nature the same with that of angels and glorified spirits. Both worship the same object, and both, according to their circumstances and capacities, drink of the same pleasure. While angels address him in a way of praise, and

enjoy the emanations of his glory, it is the privilege of saints to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." The privilege of exercising humble prayer, and of communing with God, is unspeakable; and such it will appear, if we consider the sinful state of the creature on whom it is conferred. Real prayer is the nearest approach to God, and the means of the highest enjoyment of him, of which we are capable in this life. He who never prayed cannot conceive the advantages of prayer, and he who has prayed as he ought cannot express them. The importance of prayer is, however, readily acknowledged by every real Christian. While the sneering infidel demands "What profit shall I have by praying?" the true believer can reply, "It is good for me to draw near to God." Experience has taught him that prayer is the principal means of nourishing the spiritual life, of enlarging the exercise of grace, and of maintaining the vigour and comfort of the soul. No religious employment, how useful soever, nor any external exertions, however laudable, can supersede the necessity, or supply the place of prayer.—We are dependent upon God for every thing; we derive from him all our support, both natural and spiritual; "every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights;" and, as he hath appointed prayer as the way in which he will bestow his favours upon sinful creatures, and has made the right performance of every duty to depend on it,—it is evidently the most important exercise in which we can engage. The Almighty

can indeed at any time impress the minds of his creatures, and without the use of means can supply their wants; but, as in the natural world, he hath ordained the sun by which we are warmed, created air by which we breathe, and provided the food by which we are supported: so, in the moral and spiritual world, he has appointed means through which we are to receive communications from him.* Prayer is the channel through which God will convey his undeserved favours and blessings. This is the order which he has established; and though he gives all freely, and not for our sakes, yet he will be sought unto and inquired of by us for those mercies which we want at his hands. And when we connect in our thoughts a consideration of the communicable excellencies of the blessed God, with our absolute need of his bounty, we can require no other argument to convince us of the propriety and importance of making "our requests known unto him by prayer and supplication."

* "If the phrase 'means of grace,' has any propriety, (which rightly understood it must be allowed to have,) it must relate to the moral influence of Christian institutions, in exciting those dispositions of heart to which the promises of grace relate, and in calling into exercise the principles of the regenerate nature. In this sense, the character of means pre-eminently attaches to prayer. Prayer is the revealed condition of promised blessings; prayer is the very medium of that heavenly communion which brings life, and strength, and peace into the soul; prayer, the prayer of faith, is a sure and effectual sign of grace in us, and of God's good will toward us, by the which he doth really work invisibly in the soul."—*Conder on Conformity.*

CHAPTER IV.

The Object of Prayer.

THE proper and ultimate object of prayer is God alone. That great and glorious Spirit, who is eternally possessed of every possible perfection, and infinite in them all: infinite in wisdom, goodness, power, mercy, and truth. He is also omniscient and omnipresent. Nothing can possibly escape his notice. None can go from his presence, for he is near to all his creatures; in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Amidst the millions of petitions that are presented to him, not one is lost, or forgotten. He is the "God that heareth prayer, and unto him shall all flesh come." The Deity alone is the proper object of all religious worship; and that, on account of his infinite excellencies. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or Trinity in unity, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory, is the object of faith, love, and adoration.*

*. "The whole Deity," says Dr. Collyer, "in the mystery of his substance is the object of worship. We know nothing of God but what he has been pleased to reveal; and whatever he has stated as fact, in connection with his own being, however incomprehensible, should be received by us without dispute. The old worn-out objection, that it is impossible to believe what we do not understand, always

Each person distinctly, though not separately, is to be prayed to and praised by Christians. "The solemn ordinary worship of the church," says Dr. Owen, "and so of private believers in their families and closets, is under a special direction and guidance. For the person of the Father, as the eternal fountain of power, grace, and mercy, is the formal object of our prayers, unto whom our supplications are directed. The divine nature absolutely considered, is the object of natural worship and invocation; but it is the same divine nature in the person of the Father, that is the proper object of evangelical worship and adoration. So our Saviour hath taught us to call upon God under

sophistical and false, is here, of all other cases, the most inapplicable. This would be to believe in neither matter nor spirit—both are incomprehensible, both have been denied. Faith rests upon testimony, and the testimony upon which it rests regards necessarily the things of which no other evidence can be obtained, and which are not in their nature, within the limits of human faculties. But when I believe what I do not comprehend, (and without so doing I must be an universal sceptic,) I believe the fact, to which the evidence is rational and complete; and leave the mode, respecting which nothing has been revealed to me. If revelation speak positively as to the subsistence of Deity in a Trinity, and that Trinity in unity, I believe the testimony is sufficient, is paramount to all objection. I never presume to inquire how these things are, but whether they are so: and satisfied of this, I worship the God so revealed to me as he is revealed; assured, that the divine nature must ever be to me, and not to me only, but to all his intelligent creatures, even the highest order of them, incomprehensible."—*Lectures on Scripture Duties*, p. 160.

the same notion of a father, (Matt. vi. 9; John xx. 17,) and this invocation is to be by, and in the name of his son Jesus Christ, through the aid of the Holy Spirit. He is herein considered as the mediator between God and man, as the Holy Ghost is He by whom supplies of grace, enabling us unto the acceptable performance of our duties, are actually communicated unto us. This is the mystery of our religion, that we worship God according to the economy of his wisdom and grace, wherein he doth dispense of himself unto us in the person of the Father, Son, and Spirit.* To the same effect he speaks in another place.† “The immediate object is God. We have access to God. It is the Father who is here peculiarly intended; God as God. He who is the beginning and the end of all; whose nature is attended with infinite perfection, is the formal object of all divine and religious worship. Hence divine worship respects, as its object, each person in the blessed Trinity equally; not as this or that person is God,—*that* is the formal reason of all religious worship.‡ But yet as the second person is

* Dr. Owen on the Glory of Christ.

† Collection of Sermons, p. 4.

‡ Those persons who doubt of the truth of Christ's real divinity, and consequent right to divine honor and worship with the Father and the Holy Spirit, would do well seriously to consider the following argument of the same excellent divine. “We worship the Lord Christ,” says he, “who as God and man is the object of that worship: for the formal reason and object of it, is the divine nature in that person. Give me leave to say, God himself could not command the Lord Jesus to be worship-

considered as vested with his office of mediation, and the Holy Ghost as the sanctifier of his saints, so God the Father is in a peculiar manner the object of our faith, love, and worship. Hence Peter tells us, that "through Christ we believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory." (1 Pet. i. 21.) Christ being considered as mediator, God, that raised him from the dead, that is, the Father, is regarded as the ultimate object of our worship; though worshipping Him who is the Father, as God, the other persons are in the same nature worshipped."

There is no access to God since the fall but through a Mediator. All intercourse between a holy God and sinful creatures, is through this

ped with divine religious adoration, were he not God by nature; for the thing itself implieth a contradiction. Religious worship is nothing but an assignation of that honor which is due to divine excellencies; namely, to trust, believe, fear, obey, love, and submit to infinite holiness, goodness, righteousness, power; in the first cause, last end, and Sovereign Lord of all; now to assign glory proper to divine excellencies, and which receiveth its nature from its object, where divine excellencies are not, is openly contradictory. Beside, God hath said, 'I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.' He that hath not the name of God, that is, his nature, shall not, nor can have his glory, which is the object of the worship." The author would by no means have introduced these arguments into a book intended for the edification of plain people; but on account of the great importance of their being well-grounded in the above sacred truth; and the clear and conclusive method in which it is vindicated by the excellent and unanswerable writer referred to.

medium. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." I, says he, "am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." This divinely appointed way of access to God is better understood *now* than it was by those who lived under the former dispensations; nevertheless, it was then savingly known, and happily enjoyed, more or less, by all true believers.* The Messiah has been the object of hope, and the confidence of his people, from the earliest ages of time. To promote these, his obedience, sufferings, death, and intercession, were set forth by striking types and express prophecies, until his actual incarnation.

* "The true religion which Noah taught his posterity, was that which Abraham practised; the worship of one God, the Supreme Governor of all things, with hopes of his mercy through a mediator. The necessity of a mediator between God and man, was a general notion which obtained among all mankind from the beginning; for being conscious of their own meanness, vileness, and impurity, they could not conceive how it was possible for them of themselves alone, to have any access to the infinitely holy and glorious God. They considered Him as too high and too pure, and themselves too low and polluted for such a converse; and therefore concluded there must be a mediator, by whose means only they could make any address unto him, and by whose intercession alone any of their petitions could be accepted of."—*Prodeaux*.

CHAPTER V.

The Obligation of Men to pray.

THE obligation of men to pray, is universal; and may be argued from our relation to God, to whom are justly due the most humble acknowledgments, both of his authority over us, and his bounty and goodness towards us. We are the creatures of his power, and the objects of his munificence and care. "He has fed and kept us all our life," and without his continual support, we cannot exist one moment. Prayer to God is essential to real piety; and as the obligation to personal religion is indispensable, and yet cannot be discharged without communications from above, it is evidently our duty to solicit of the divine bounty that grace by which we may be enabled to do every good word and work. If it be man's duty to obey his Creator, it must be also his duty to seek from him that ability and assistance, which are necessary to enable him to perform that duty: of the truth of the supposition none can reasonably doubt or dispute; and the inference as necessarily follows. The very idea of a creature implies a Creator, and from that are inferred dependence and obligation. As the relation of a son to a parent involves in it the duties due to the father from the son, so the relation of a creature

involves in it the duties due from a creature to his Creator. If it were unreasonable that a son, having under God, his being from his parents, should not love, honour, and obey them, how much more so would it be for a rational creature, who has derived his being *entirely* from God, not to honour and obey him, nor even so much as to ask of him ability to please him? The obligation under which all men are to pray, might be argued from the light of nature, and from the commands of God: the former respects those who are without a revelation, and the latter, those who are favoured with one. That prayer is a duty of natural religion, is clear from the practice of poor heathens, as related in profane history,* and abundantly confirmed by Scripture testimony. (Gen. xxxi. 30; Judges xvii. 4, 5; Acts x. 2, 30.) But with us, who are guided by revealed truth, and who "profess and call ourselves Christians," the command of God should outweigh every other consideration. Now it is very evident

* Many of the heathen philosophers taught the duty and necessity of worshipping the gods. Seneca observes, that to worship the gods is to believe that the gods are; to render them their majesty, and ascribe to them their goodness, &c. And Plutarch denies the dignity of rationality to such as refuse to worship and acknowledge God: he asserts it to be an exceeding improper thing to ascribe true reason to those who do not acknowledge and adore the Deity. Tully speaks to the same effect; and Lactantius says, "non modo non philosophus sed nec homines quidem fuisse dixerim." Men that are destitute of religion, are so far from being learned philosophers, that they ought not to be esteemed so much as reasonable men. De superstitione. Nat. Deor.

that this duty is expressly enjoined on us in the written word of God: our Saviour described the nature, and enforced the obligation of this duty, when he spake a parable to this end: "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. (Luke xviii. 1; Psa. lxxv. 2.) And not only ought good men always to pray, but the wicked and ungodly are also commanded and encouraged to "seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near." (Isa. lv. 6, 7; Ezek. xxxvi. 37; Rom. x. 4.) Hence St. Peter's address to a man, whom he pronounced to be "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity: pray to God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." Again, St. James deemed it not injudicious to exhort sinners to the same duty: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you; cleanse your hands ye *sinners*, and purify your hearts ye double minded."

But notwithstanding the evident obligation of all men to pray, it is by true Christians only, considered as a *privilege*: to such it is, no doubt, more suitably represented in this view; for surely there can be nothing to gracious minds more pleasing or more desirable, than a liberty of access to their God and Father, to pour forth the effusions of a grateful heart, and to ask for every blessing of which they feel themselves in need.

CHAPTER VI.

The Design and Tendency of Prayer.

As God is absolutely and independently perfect, and is completely happy in the enjoyment of himself, he can have, on his own account, no motive or inducement whatever in appointing the duty of prayer. His end in requiring this duty must consequently be wholly the benefit of his creatures, that it may be a means of working on men's minds a lively sense of the sovereignty and power, wisdom and holiness, truth and faithfulness ; of the mercy, goodness, and loving-kindness of the Lord. It will also draw forth their souls in filial fear, hope, and trust, love, delight, and joy in God ; and create a sincere desire to please him, by putting on that purity and piety, humility and charity, which constitute the spirit of true christianity. And it is on these accounts that God enjoins the frequent exercise of this duty ; that the minds of men being habitually seasoned with a sense of himself, may, under divine influence, produce in them suitable affections, and a frame and temper of mind accompanied by a consistent conversation and deportment. "Prayer," says Mr. Grove, "is not a positive institution, like the ceremonies of the Law, or the sacraments of the Gospel ; but immediately founded

on the relations between God and us, and the discoveries he hath been pleased to make of himself to us, and the nature and circumstances of the present state. It is, in itself considered, a reasonable service, hath an apparent congruity in it, and visible tendency to promote the most valuable ends." I have before observed, that prayer comprehends in it almost the whole of religion, or piety towards God; it is, indeed, practically considered, the primary part of divine worship, and the essence of religion itself. While we invoke the blessed God, as the object of all religious homage, and acknowledge and adore his absolute perfections,—while we profess ourselves derived from him and dependent on him,—while we declare our subjection and continual obligation to him as our creator, preserver, and governor,—while we confess our unworthiness and demerits, implore his pardon, profess our sincere contrition for past sins, and declare our earnest desire through his grace, of being more devoted to his service;—if while we do all this, our prayers are accompanied with suitable dispositions of mind, we honour the divine perfections, and feel our passions warmed, as it were, with heavenly fire, to dispose us to seriousness and attention, and to awaken and establish in our minds a holy awe and reverence of God. The exercise of real prayer fills us with a filial fear, and even impresses on our minds such distinct and extensive apprehensions of the divine perfections, as are the true and real foundation of practical godliness, and therefore tends to promote such principles of action as are

suited to a rational and accountable creature. Thus admirably adapted is prayer to improve all those graces in which the exercise of religion consists, and upon which the credit and comfort of it depend ! But prayer more particularly tends to promote an habitual seriousness of spirit, and ability to govern our thoughts and passions : the pains we take to collect our thoughts and compose our minds, when we are about to speak to God in prayer, will leave on our spirits those impressions which will beget an habit of seriousness, and render it much less difficult for us to maintain at other times the possession of our minds, and a wise sobriety of thought ; and as the acts of devotion and praise tend to excite, as well as to express thankfulness ; so the sense of our unworthiness tends to beget repentance, the confession of sin, and the profession of sorrow on account of it. Solemn approaches to God are adapted to impress the mind with a sense of sin, and to inspire us with self-abhorrence on account of it. It was by a view of the holiness of God, that Isaiah felt himself to be “ a man of unclean lips ;” and by conversing with him that Job was brought to abhor himself, “ and repent in dust and ashes.” When we lay ourselves low before the footstool of the divine majesty, and with sincerity and humility acknowledge our weakness, folly, and guilt, our consequent unworthiness of his mercies, and exposure to his just displeasure : our minds naturally tend to humility, and to that true “ repentance, which needeth not to be repented of.” Again, a constant and conscientious discharge of

this duty awakens and confirms the rational dictates of our minds, concerning the omnipresence and omniscience of God, and his providence, universal over the whole world, and especially over his church and people; and establishes in the belief of what the Scripture hath taught us in relation to the same important truth. By being often in the divine presence, and pouring out our hearts before God, we are fixed in an habitual persuasion of his being the searcher of hearts, and of his knowing all things; we gain a firmer belief of the supremacy of his providence, and see more visibly the hand of God directing all our affairs on earth. In prayer we acknowledge and celebrate his perfections, derive the ideas of them in our minds, beg of God to imprint them deeply there; and thus these objects, so remote from sense, appear still more and more real, and carry with them a greater force and efficacy. Prayer engages the divine presence, and that becomes a source of the highest enjoyment. It draws grace into exercise, and replenishes the means of our satisfaction. Sin is destructive of enjoyment; but prayer is the antidote for sin, and of those anxious cares which interrupt our tranquillity. The sweetest life that we can live on earth is, to "be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, to make our requests known unto God." The influence of prayer is such, that it enables us to overcome the greatest difficulties, to obtain the choicest comforts, and to subdue the most formidable enemies. The habitual exercise of this duty also enlarges the mind to

great and noble conceptions; it hereby acquires a grandeur of thought, an elevation above present things. Prayer is indeed an abstraction of mind from visible objects, where the soul aspires to God, and to those things that are of higher and nobler nature: and when thus frequently employed in spiritual exercises, the mind rises to a heavenly temper, and as its taste becomes spiritual, it can be satisfied with nothing sensual. Such a soul has other relishes and inclinations, and finds real pleasure in things heavenly and divine; a happiness suited to its own nature, and to that of the Supreme Being, whom by continual application to him, it learns to regard, not only as the author of its felicity, but as its supreme object of love and delight. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."—And it may also be justly remarked, that prayer tends to inflame our minds with love to God, as the author of our being, and the source of all our happiness. In the wonderful display of his infinite perfections in the natural and moral world, we are led to the most copious and amiable views of the divine excellencies; and in the most admirable instances and excellent effects of his creation, providence, and redemption by Jesus Christ, we are naturally induced to admire and love him as the greatest and the best of beings. And when, by the exercise of this duty, we frequently address the divine Majesty under a sense of our renewed mercies, and endeavour to recollect every circumstance by which he increases his favours, and consequently

our obligations: how naturally does it tend to beget love to God, and to excite the most ingenuous acknowledgments, and the most grateful sensations of which we are capable. Thus, inspired with love and filled with gratitude, we exult with joy in the privilege of a free access to him, and in the pleasure and happiness which we enjoy by this divine intercourse. As love to God is promoted by prayer to him, so also it exercises and increases charity to men. To ask of God pardon of our sins, as we profess from our hearts to forgive those that trespass against us, implies a consciousness of this duty as one of indispensable obligation; and more especially the act of intercession for others. And when joined with them in public prayer, how naturally does it tend to expand the mind, to fill it with the most generous sentiments of universal good will, and with principles of an extensive and diffusive benevolence. Prayer widens the heart, and warms it with heavenly charity; it tends to unite in the bonds of the most tender affection those for whom and with whom we pray, as children of the same parent, exercised with the same or the like temptations and difficulties, and having one and the same home in view, to which we are fellow-travellers and heirs. We love them as we love ourselves, "without dissimulation and without hypocrisy."


Lastly, prayer has a tendency to raise and establish our hopes in the favour of God, and in all the blessings consequent upon it. By some degree of it, indeed, we are encouraged to pray; but in the exercise of it we often feel a joyful expectation of the

things prayed for, though sometimes it may be but faint and languid, mingled with fears that may for a short interval deprive the mind of comfort. Perseverance in this exercise tends to strengthen our hopes, so as to stay our minds, and preserve them calm and serene, believing that our prayers will be accepted and answered, so far as infinite wisdom shall see fit in this life, and that, continuing in a course of piety and holiness, we shall hereafter be rendered happy and glorious in the presence of our God and Saviour, without measure and without end.

With such intrinsic excellence, grounds so rational, and effects so beneficial, it is not surprising that prayer is so frequently commanded by a wise and gracious God, and that he has in the Scriptures of truth made so many promises for its encouragement. The more our need for prayer, the greater ought to be our readiness and diligence in pursuit of this exercise; we ought to be induced, not only by the authority of God, but by his goodness also, which obliges us to pursue our own happiness, and annexes so many additional encouragements to a practice which has, in its own nature, so much to recommend it. I will conclude this chapter with the words of the Rev. T. Scott, which are an excellent summary of what has been said:—"The efficacy of prayer to bring light and wisdom into the mind, peace into the conscience, submission into the will, and purity into the affections; to keep our garments clean, our armour bright, and our

hearts joyful ; to make us strong for the conflict, for service, and for sufferings ; to obtain sufficiency for our place and work, and a blessing on our endeavours ; to secure peace with our enemies, or protection against them ; to carry every point that is truly good, for to bring down blessings on our families, friends, and country ; to procure peace and prosperity in the church, the conversion of sinners, and the spread of the Gospel ; and for all things which we can desire or conceive, must be allowed by every man who reverences the Scriptures, or knows what it is to walk with God. Did men speculate and dispute less, and pray more, their souls would be like a watered garden : fruitful, joyful, beautiful, and fragrant. Prayer is the first breath of the divine life ; it is the pulse of the believing soul, the best criterion of health or sickness, vigour or debility ; by prayer we draw water with joy from the wells of salvation ; by prayer faith puts forth its energy in apprehending the promised blessing, and receiving from the Redeemer's fulness, in leaning on his almighty arm, and making his name our strong tower, and in overcoming the world, the flesh, and the devil. All other means of grace are made effectual by prayer ; every doctrine and instruction produce their effects in proportion as this is attended to ; every grace revives or languishes, according to the same rule. Our grand conflict with Satan and our own hearts is about prayer ; the sinner feels less reluctance, and meets less resistance, in respect to all other means

of grace, than in retiring to pour out his heart before God in secret ; and the believer will find his chief difficulty to consist in continuing instant and fervent in this spiritual exercise. If he succeeds here, all else will eventually give place before him, and turn out to his benefit and comfort."



CHAPTER VII.

The manner in which Prayer should be performed.

THIS is next in importance to the duty itself. Whether therefore we speak of public, of private, or of social prayer, the way in which it is acceptable is clearly taught in the Holy Scriptures. And, as to some circumstantialia relating to it, as they do not necessarily affect the state of the heart, we are left to choose for ourselves respecting them. The principal question which here appears of importance, is that of the respective propriety of written and extempore prayer. Few subjects have, among professing Christians, been agitated with more warmth, than that now before us. But as the Scriptures abound with examples of each practice, what reason can be given why each may not, under certain circumstances, be used with equal propriety? To attempt, however, entirely to remove the prejudices of men against one, or the other, of these methods, may be vain and fruitless; yet an impartial representation of the peculiar advantages of each, may probably tend to lessen the prejudices of Christians in this particular, and give them more favourable sentiments of such as think and practice differently from themselves. Those who are advocates for free or extempore prayer, have not unfre-

quently been misunderstood by those who prefer a precomposed form. From the use of the term *extempore*, as employed to designate free prayer, they have understood it to signify speaking entirely without premeditation. This, indeed, is properly signified by the word, but it is only a vulgar or mistaken notion of that prayer, which is pleaded for and practised by Dissenters in general.

The advocates for extempore prayer, (by which they understand, not the hasty flight of the imagination, but the result of serious and deliberate premeditation,) conceive of such prayers as the most natural, and therefore the most beneficial, and as having the most direct tendency to impress and improve the mind. They also think, that by learning to pray without a form, we learn the language of a divine intercourse, and acquire a capacity, and increase a disposition to pray; and, that the constant use of prescribed forms implies a neglect of the most proper use of our faculties in meditation and prayer, in which they are evidently capable, and wherein their noblest exercise consists. They say it is impossible that any form should answer every emergency, or take in the variety of cases of Christians at different times, and under different circumstances of life: that forms are a clog and hindrance to the mind of a well-disposed person, whose proficiency in religion, and whose natural and acquired abilities, capacitate him for this work, that to such, forms are not only unnecessary, but inexpedient. It has been said farther, that to pray by forms is inverting the order of things; that

prayer should take its rise from the heart ; and that words are consequently to flow from devout sentiments, and not to lead them. They urge the frequent commands of Scripture to study to use our abilities, and to watch unto prayer. They likewise urge, that the promise of divine assistance implies the propriety of extempore prayer, and that if performed in this manner to the best of their ability, they have reason to hope for the acceptance of their petitions. With respect to public forms of prayer, they argue, that the constant, unvaried use of them, and the repetition of the same words, have a great tendency to introduce coldness and formality in divine worship ; and, that where the same set of words and phrases pass over the ear in constant rehearsal, the mind loses by degrees those lively and devout sensations, which it at first received from them.

Those Christians, on the other hand, who plead for precomposed forms to be used in families, where necessity requires them, are not to be charged as the absurd advocates for popish liturgies to be invariably used in either public or private worship. They nevertheless think, that certain forms of devotion and prayer have, under different circumstances, from early ages of the church of God, been employed to considerable advantage in social worship. That there are some inconveniences attending this method of worship, is admitted ; and it is not supposed that the advantages connected with it, will be deemed sufficient to entitle it in all cases to the preference. But may

not the same be said of free prayer? Alas, in many instances, I fear, it can scarcely claim that title. Such weakness, distraction, diffidence, and pride, are incident to fallen creatures, that in presenting to God what is understood to be our own, in the audience of others, few can so entirely free themselves from shackles as to enjoy those superior advantages which are by some contended for. Even "ministers," it has been candidly conceded, "are exposed to the pain and perplexity of losing the composure of their minds in the performance of this duty. Their feelings are liable to be agitated, their memories may disappoint them, their thoughts may become embarrassed, and they may be thus disabled from following a proper train of sentiment, and expressing it in suitable words." The same author* further observes, that "there is some hazard of our being too much influenced by personal feelings with regard to our fellow creatures, or by prejudices of party, to which even good men are liable. We may be betrayed into allusions to persons and temporal affairs, which may touch some jarring strings in the sentiments and passions of different fellow-worshippers. We may be tempted to seek to please men, by too favourable descriptions or complimentary implications, or to reprove them when they have displeased us, by implications of complaint and censure. There is," continues he, "no small peril of his mistaking fluency for piety ;

* Dr. Smith, in a Sermon delivered in Cary Street, Feb. 8, 1821.

the power of memory, the readiness of imitating others, or the effects of natural eloquence, for the fervour of holy affections. If, instead of bowing down with holy penitent hearts before the throne of grace, we seek to gain admiration, or are vainly pleased with our own performances, our sin and danger are exceedingly great. We cannot, therefore, be too "jealous over ourselves with a godly jealousy; we cannot be too anxious or too vigilant, lest our prayer be turned into sin, and an abomination before God." Now, when the advantages of which these respective methods of prayer are capable, and the evils to which each of them are liable, are weighed against each other, it may require a clearer sight than some objectors enjoy, to discern on which side the beam preponderates. The respectable author above quoted observes indeed, that "none of the evils attendant on extempore prayer are necessary, but only accidental defects, which may be avoided or remedied." And may not, I ask, the same be said of the evils or defects to which they are liable who use a written form? Are they the evils and defects of the one any more *necessarily* than of the other?*

* Some of the most plausible reasoning against the use of prescript forms of prayer, are to be seen in French, in a book entitled, *Des Raisons de la Necessité d'attendre en silence pour le culte solennel de Dieu. Par Marie Brook.* This authoress proceeds through about sixty pages, upon the supposition that those who use written prayers must *necessarily* be formal, ignorant, and hypocritical. And as many writers of superior order have conducted their argu-

But to return ; if some Christians are so gifted and qualified by gracious experience, and by natural

ments in this despicable, but specious manner, it may not be impertinent to give the reader a sample of her's. "There is," says she, "an essential difference between praying in reality, as the Spirit shall teach, and praying in forms, as men and books advise us. Those who pray under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, pray with additional fervency ; having their attention fixed on God alone, their understandings are opened into a true discerning of their spiritual wants, and their souls quickened to a lively humble, sincere worship, wherein their spirits are refreshed and gain strength in the Lord, and in the power of his might. On the other hand, men and books may furnish with fair and plausible expressions, but cannot effect that brokenness of spirit, that contrition of heart which the Spirit of God gives. They may teach to say, Lord ! Lord ! while Satan rules in the will and affections, and carries the imaginations after divers vanities."—p. 19, 20, and p. 29. "What efficiency can those prayers have which are made in the will, and by the contrivance of men, or that are uttered either from books, invention, or memory, while the heart neither feels the things the mouth speaks, nor ever experienced what the tongue declares. What are these but vain repetitions and empty sounds ? While people remain insensible of the real condition of their souls, and of the true, self-abasing fear of God, they seem to think, they shall be heard for their much speaking, if they content themselves with the frequent repetition of long and lifeless prayers, which they have not so much as weightily considered before they uttered them."

To expose the weakness of such reasoning, we need only observe, that the very same objections might be made to our joining in any prayers of others, how pious, sincere, and fervent soever they might be ; for they must necessarily be as distinct from our own particular words and frames, as

eloquence, as to be able to lead the worship of God in their families, in the way of free, or extempore prayer, it is presumed that very many are not. In such cases is there no use to be made of the devout composures of other men? And may not even this be done, without confining ourselves to all the words and syllables of their writings? May we not have their help, without making them our absolute dictators? There are surely cases wherein they may not only be lawful, but where they ought to have the preference. The advantages or disadvantages of each of these methods of prayer, must operate differently according to the abilities of the different persons using them. Persons who can make a good use of their limbs, would be much incumbered by crutches, which nevertheless would be of singular service to those whose weakness would prevent them from walking without their assistance. "Some are so weak in their faculties," says Bishop Wilkins; "have so small a stock of ideas, and those so confused; have their minds so little opened by their knowledge and sense of divine things, and move in so low a sphere in religion, that it cannot be doubted but a well-composed form may be very useful to them for a time, until they are enabled to outgrow the need of it. They may find their own case and condition more clearly set down, than they are able to express it themselves: and if

those prayers that are "contrived by men and written in a book;" and the speaker might, perchance, be less pious and sincere in the one case, than the reader in the other.

the use of such a form do prove a means to warm their affections, and enkindle their graces, certainly it cannot be justly stiled a quenching of the Spirit.* It is not essential to the nature of prayer, that it be either read or rehearsed by memory, or by immediate sudden suggestion; but rather that it be delivered with understanding and suitable affections, with humility and confidence, and an inward sense of our condition. Nor is there any great difference (as they are considered in themselves) between repeating by memory, and reading out of a book; the memory being a kind of invisible book for the register of our thoughts." And here I cannot omit the words of the pious Dr. Doddridge, who imitates the candour of the bishop just quoted: "I hope," says he, "I shall give no offence to any Christian by saying, that I have long thought an irreconcilable aversion to forms of prayer, even of human composition, as vain a superstition as a passionate attachment to them. And if any had rather

* "'Forms stint the spirit,' Watts has said,
 'And therefore oft are wrong;
 At best a crutch the weak to aid,
 A cumbrance to the strong.'
 Old David, both in prayer and praise
 A form for crutches brings,
 But Watts has dignified his lays,
 And furnish'd him with wings.
 E'en Watts a form for praise can choose,
 For prayer who throws it by;
 Crutches to walk he can refuse,
 But uses them to fly."

MR. SAMUEL WESLEY.

a family should be prayerless, than that a well-chosen form should be gravely and solemnly read in it, I think he judges as absurdly as if he would rather see them starve to death, than fed out of a dish whose materials and shape are disagreeable to him. The main thing is, that God be reverently and sincerely worshipped and adored; that suitable blessings, temporal and spiritual, be sought from him for ourselves and others; and cordial thanksgiving returned to him for the various gifts of his continual bounty; and if this be done, the circumstances of doing it, though I cannot think them quite indifferent, are comparatively of small importance. I know by sure experience, in a great variety of instances, that it is very possible for Christians of no extraordinary genius, and with a very low education, to acquit themselves honourably in prayer, without the assistance of forms: and they who at first need them may, and probably if they seriously set about it, would, soon outgrow that need. But if they did not, God might be glorified, and families edified by the continual use of such helps.* “To read, consider, and meditate upon such written prayers, or to make use of expressions set down in them,” says Dr. Owen, “where the hearts of those that read them are really affected, because they find their state and condition, their wants and desires declared in them, is not unlawful, but may be of good use unto some. And as the private religion of some persons has suffered for

* Plain Address, p. 15.

want of such assistance, so I am well assured, that one reason why there are so many prayerless families in the nation, (even where the governors of those families are truly religious,) is because they find they are not capable, or have not courage to express themselves in morning and evening prayers, in the midst of their families, in a proper and edifying manner; and yet through some mistaken principles in their education, they have been taught to abandon all the assistance they might derive from religious composures. What if the master of a family took some well written prayers, as directive in the matter and method for the right discharge of this duty, and made use of the expressions set down in them, where the state and condition, wants and desires of his family were declared, and then added and altered, omitted, or enlarged, according to present occasions."* With this, agree the words of Mr. Bennet, in his excellent book, *The Christian Oratory*; "I doubt not but serious persons, who have long accustomed themselves to forms, may exercise true devotion, and find much comfort in the use of them. Indeed the manner of praying, with or without a form, I reckon to be so far indifferent, that neither the one nor the other is necessary, so necessary, that the different cannot be acceptable."

It is, however, needful, in the use of prescribed forms to which any have been accustomed, that they narrowly watch over their own hearts, for fear

* Dr. Owen's *Work of the Spirit in Prayer*.

of that lip service and formality, to which, in such cases, we are more especially exposed. Indeed, it must be acknowledged, that things intended for our help, often prove hindrances, by our resting in them; and making an end of means, instead of seeking the end by them. Books of devotion are highly calculated to excite in us those sentiments and desires wherewith we should address ourselves at the throne of grace;* but if we are content with reading over the words that express them, without forming these desires, and entering into these sentiments, such forms are certainly injurious, rather than helpful to us; as they serve only to flatter us into a fatal security. There is, indeed, a great and evident difference between merely repeating prayers, and praying; yet we may easily mistake our opinion, or what we approve in our judgments, for what we desire in our hearts. For instance, we know that it is reasonable to love God with all our

* Mr. Orton writing to a friend, touches upon this subject, and justly remarks respecting the use of forms of prayer, that there is danger in trusting in the mere form, the *opus operatum*, just in reading the prayers without due seriousness and solemnity, and taking pains to impress the sentiments and excite the desires they contain, in the heart. I fear we all fail in this respect, and whether with or without a book, we do not feel the good sentiments we utter, nor warmly desire the blessings we ask. At least I find it so with myself, and fear it is so with others also. I think their prayers, were it not for this, would have a visibly better effect on their tempers and lives, as all sincere prayers are certainly adapted to have, as well as to engage the divine assistance.—*Orton's Letters*, p. 13.

hearts, and that we should be humble, meek, contented, resigned. And these virtues, most will approve, when in a composed and serious frame of mind, and accordingly they scruple not to use the warmest expressions of devotional writers, as if they really meant them as the objects of their earnest desires, while, indeed, they only approve of them as what their reason tells them are right and good. Hence it is that we often observe so wide a difference between the prayers and the practices of men.

Before we dismiss this part of the subject, let it be observed, that the impropriety of written forms of prayer, cannot be fairly argued from the abuse of them, for, on the same principle, free or extempore petitions, would be open to objection, as they are equally liable to abuse. Men, to indulge their vanity, to attract the attention of their fellow creatures, and excite their admiration, may, "love to stand praying in the synagogue,"* and good men have acknowledged the danger of having too much regard to others in their addresses to God, and the necessity of guarding against pride and ostentation, lest they should lose the blessing they ask, through

* "It must be observed," says Dr. Hawes, "that there are persons who have much of the gift of prayer, that have not the spirit of prayer; these, like the ravens who fed Elijah, bring good food to those who join with them, whilst their own pride, and vanity of their abilities is the carrion on which they feed *themselves*. Their prayers may be blessed unto others, but they are an abomination to God, and bring a curse upon their own souls."—*Communicant's Companion*, p. 96.

their unfitness to receive it. Finally, in order to pray acceptably, and to receive needful promised blessings from the God of our salvation, we must be careful to avoid cold unmeaning formality, vain repetitions,* revengeful tempers, and all covetous and sinful desires; we must pray with faith, fervour, constancy, patience, and perseverance, to the end of our lives; for our prayers must never cease till our wants are no more; till our hopes are realized, and our desires satisfied with the joys above, in the delightful, everlasting work of adoration and praise.

* There is no reason to think, as some have insinuated, that our Lord here forbids the use of forms of prayer, and that because they are repeated over many times, they are therefore to be considered as "vain repetitions." If our desires accompany our words, the oftener we repeat them the better. Those words which are expressive of our desires can never be improper, while we desire what is promised. Our Lord himself prayed three times saying the same words, (Mat. xxvi. 44,) and the prayer which he taught his disciples, is evidently to be considered as a form, as well as a pattern. The repetitions which he calls "vain," and which he condemned in pagan worship, are those long and lifeless prayers, that unmeaning tautology by the merit of which they thought to be heard. To repeat words without meaning, either with or without a prescript form, is certainly a "vain repetition," which Christians should be careful to avoid.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Advantages of Family Prayer.

THE advantages arising from the practice of family prayer, have been, perhaps, sufficiently shown, by what has been said on prayer in general. It may, however, be of service, briefly to notice them here, in order to encourage those, who have set up the worship of God in their families, to continue so excellent a practice; as well as to persuade professing Christians, who have hitherto neglected this duty, immediately to arise and set up the altar of domestic worship.

1st. They who habitually pray with their families, are discharging a great and important duty that devolves upon them; and so escape the evil denounced against those who habitually neglect it. "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen, that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name." (Jer. x. 25.) An imprecation by an inspired prophet, is a prediction. "It shall be poured out."

The prophet must here mean families as distinguished from nations, or as the constituent parts of them; or if he mean tribes or clans, as distinguished from nations, he speaks of all tribes, without exception, great and small. And the reason equally holds good with regard to a proper family. It is here taken for granted, that every family,

which is not a heathen family, will call upon God's name. "It is true, indeed," says Mr. Howe, "that families are frequently taken in a larger sense, sometimes they signify nations; but being both put together in the text, it is manifestly the design of the Holy Ghost to notify to us irreligious families, composing and making up irreligious nations. For what is a profane carnal nation and people made up of? Heathen and nations are all one. When nations then are first mentioned, and afterwards families, it is plain they are mentioned as constituent parts of atheistical, ungodly, and irreligious nations. And, when it is said, 'pour out thy fury upon such, it signifies a denunciation of divine fury upon such. Dismal, horrid, clouds of wrath hang over such families, that will be discharged in terrible destructive storms.' Now if heathen nations and families are to be thus punished, what think you will become of those families which providence has placed in a christian land, if they live as heathens, without regard to the true God and his worship? 'The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just.' What a dreadful look has this scripture towards a wicked, that is to say, an irreligious, prayerless family! What a benign aspect towards a righteous one! How tremendous is the curse of God! and this does not only hover over the building; does not look in at the window; does not stand at the door; but is in the house, spreading through every apartment, and feeding, like a worm, upon all the possessions. You

may see the appearance of pleasure, and as you draw nigh, you may hear music and dancing, but 'there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked;' magnificence may reign there; there may be rich furniture, and a table spread with dainties, but what are all these, when divine anger has said, let their table be made a snare, a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them. 'The house of the wicked shall be overthrown, but the tabernacle of the righteous shall flourish.'**

2. If it be said the advantage arising from the

* The God of providence and power, is sometimes pleased to appear in a very signal manner in behalf of families and individuals, that fear him and call upon his name. A credible history tells us that about a century and a half ago, there was an earthquake in Switzerland, by which part of a mountain was thrown down, and it fell upon a village that stood under it, and crushed every house and inhabitant to pieces, except the corner of one cottage, where the master of the house with his poor family were praying.—*Polani Synta*, 811.

Old Mr. Thomas Bradbury was remarkable for a strict punctuality in family devotion. One evening when the bell had rung, the servants ran hastily up to prayer, and forgot to shut the area door next the street; some fellows seeking an opportunity to commit a robbery, happened to observe the door open, and one of them getting over the pallisadoes, entered the house; creeping up stairs, he heard the old gentleman praying, that God would preserve his house from thieves, &c. The man was thunderstruck and unable to persist in his design. He therefore returned and told the circumstance to his companions, who abused him for his timidity. But the man himself was so affected that soon after he related the event to Mr. B. and became an attendant on his ministry.

punctual and upright performance of this great christian duty, is, that it is peculiarly calculated to promote both the present and future happiness of those who unite and engage in it. The benefit extends not only to the master of the "blessed habitation," who may be actually and personally employed in the solemn work of reading the word of God and of prayer, but also to the wife, the children, and the servants. The parent, who loves to walk in the ordinance of the Lord, will consider family religion, not merely as a duty imposed by divine authority, but as a privilege granted by divine grace. And although children and servants may not immediately be capable of considering it in this light, yet "the word of God and prayer," may, by this means, be blessed, to restrain them from those practices which might be ruinous to them, both in time and eternity. Persons may indeed be very wicked under religious advantages. The means of grace, and the grace of the means are very distinguishable from each other, and are frequently found separate. Children trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, have been known to turn aside into the paths of the destroyer, and to bring down a parent's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. And there are servants who see good example, hear daily instruction, and attend morning and evening worship, and yet "have no fear of God before their eyes," yea, they can turn from these exercises, and treat them with contempt, and become tenfold more the children of hell than others. But wherever such awful characters are to

be found, let them remember that they cannot sin so cheaply as others, they will be left without excuse; their guilt will be in proportion to their advantages, and their punishment to their guilt.

But although, in some instances, the means may be employed, without securing the end, yet is it not far more probable that families will be religious where God is solemnly worshipped, his word read, and his praises sung, than where these duties are neglected? How can it be expected that children and servants will become the humble worshippers of the God of heaven, if they have been educated in the neglect of family religion? Can prayerless families expect to have praying children? If they neglect to instruct them, can they expect that they will grow up in the knowledge of God and of themselves? On the other hand, how many children and servants have had everlasting reason to bless the kind providence which cast their lot, and fixed the bounds of their habitation in a christian family, where "prayer was wont to be made." "I bless God," says Mr. Flavel, "for a religious tender father, who often poured out his soul to God for me, and this stock of prayers I esteem above the fairest inheritance on earth." And indeed, if we recollect the many great and precious promises given to pious, praying parents, with relation not only to themselves but to their offspring, and household in general, we can but perceive that a good man, however poor he may be, "leaveth an inheritance to his children's children." God bears a regard to the descendants of his followers, as David

asked, "Is there any left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake;" so, by the same noble friendship does God act. "The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments, his seed shall be mighty upon the earth, the generation of the upright shall be blessed." Hence Moses tells the Israelites, that they were not preferred to national privileges "for their righteousness, only the Lord had a delight in their fathers, to love them, and to choose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day."

So that by setting up family worship, parents provide most effectually for the future welfare of their children and domestics, and engage the care of heaven in their behalf, when themselves are laid in the silent grave. "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." (Gen. xviii. 18, 19.)

In the third place, consider the *superior* social peace and quiet that is enjoyed in pious, praying families, beyond that to which those can pretend, in whose families prayer is excluded and despised. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" To have those who are of the same family, peaceful, loving,

and obliging, and studying the ease and comfort of each other. There can be no happiness without domestic peace; nor is any thing so likely to promote it as family worship.* No wonder then that those who neglect this duty are continually troubled with the misconduct and perverseness of those under them and about them; no wonder that jarrings, dissensions, and other disgraceful circumstances are continually disquieting them. It is just what might be expected. How can they who neglect the worship of God in their families, look for peace and comfort in them? I am sure, also, that I may confidently appeal to those who have regular and daily family prayer, that when conducted in a simple and devout spirit, it has a direct tendency to remove, or allay, all those unhappy passions to which our common nature is subject, and which, more or less, appear in every family. It unites together the members of the family, gives its head a feeling of tenderness and affection for those under him, and makes them esteem and love him. Mr. Cecil, speaking of family religion, says, "It diffuses a sympathy through the members. It calls the mind off from the deadening effects of worldly affairs. It arrests every member with a morning and evening sermon

* "Let prayer," says Bishop Leighton, "be not only the key that opens the day, and the lock that shuts out the night; but let it be also from morning to night, our staff and stay in all our labours; and enable us to go cheerfully unto the mount of God. Prayer brings consolation to the languishing soul, drives away the devil, and is the great medium whereby all grace and peace are communicated to us."

in the midst of all the hurries and cares of life. It says, there is a God, there is a spiritual world! There is a life to come! It fixes the ideas of responsibility in the mind. It furnishes a tender and judicious father or master with an opportunity of gently glancing at faults, where a direct admonition might not be expedient. It enables him to relieve the weight with which subordination or service often sets on the minds of inferiors."

Dr. Buchanan draws a striking contrast between a praying family and a prayerless one. "How painful it is to reflect," says he, "that there should be in this kingdom many domestic societies, among whom the worship of God is not known: in whose houses no grateful accents are ever heard, no exultations of heart for divine goodness. There are, indeed, accents of exultation and mirth, and the harp, and the viol, and the tabret, and the pipe, are in their feasts, but 'there is no remembrance of God, they regard not the operations of his hands.' While even inanimate nature, in a certain sense, offereth praise to the great Creator, and fulfilleth his will; these men pass through life in silence! insensible to the mercies, or judgments, or power, or providence of the unseen God: yes, more insensible than the inhabitants of the heathen lands, upon whom the light of truth hath never shined. How different," continues he, "is the scene which is presented in those happy families, where the voice of praise and thanksgiving consecrates every day! Where the word of God is devoutly read, and infants are taught to lisp their Creator's

praise. There, from day to day, domestic peace, and love, and harmony, are cherished by the sublimest motives, and strengthened by the most powerful sanctions. Such a family is as a well-tuned instrument, which emits no discordant jars, but by its harmonizing sounds, soothes the heart, and imparts a pleasure, rational and refined."

412 "How pleasant 'tis to see,
Kindred and friends agree,
Each in his proper station move,
And each fulfil his part,
With sympathising heart,
In all the cares of life and love."

To dwell beneath the roof where these excellencies are realized, will, by every true christian, be regarded as an unspeakable felicity. Where the fountain of domestic comfort is seasoned by divine grace, the streams will all become pure and salutary, and every refreshing will excite our gratitude, for the blessing of that religion, which brings so much present comfort, and so encouraging an assurance of everlasting joy. Happy is the family, whose various members are adorned by genuine religion, while they live together in peace and love, each studying to discharge with fidelity, the duty more directly incumbent upon him, while every one endeavours, by a spirit of mutual accommodation, to promote the comfort of all! Happy the neighbourhood where the spirit of true christianity is found to predominate, diffusing, in every direction, its cheering, purifying, and healing influence! And happy will be the world, when the universal disce-

mination of the knowledge of the Gospel, shall heal the wound which the indulgence of the worst passions of our nature, have so long inflicted on its inhabitants; and when, according to the early description of this benign religion, it shall not only bring glory to God, but every where diffuse "peace on earth, and good will towards men."

If then, my christian reader would enjoy the testimony of an approving conscience, imitate the best examples, and engage the protection of heaven; if he would secure the tranquillity, and promote the the salvation of his household. (Gen. xviii. 16, 18; Job i. 5; Gen. xviii. 18; 2 Sam. vii. 20; Dan vii. 10.) Let him begin and continue the worship of God in his family. Let him resolve, with Jacob, to build an altar to the Lord, and say, with David, "I will behave myself wisely, in a perfect way; I will walk within my house with a perfect heart." "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.—For it is a good thing to shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night."

CHAPTER IX.

Objections to Family Prayer answered.

I SHOULD hope that what has been said is sufficient to convince the judgment of my reader, of the propriety, and importance, of prayer in general, and of family prayer in particular. But we must not rest here; for the approval of a duty, and the practice of it, are often widely separate. Objections to prayer, instead of proceeding from the judgment, too frequently arise from the heart. It is the heart that is in fault. The true reason of the omission of family worship, is, either the total absence, or lamentable declension of vital piety. If men receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith in, and obedience to the Gospel, and live under the influence of the authority and grace of their covenant God and Father, they will then, instead of regarding his worship in their houses as a yoke which neither they nor their families are able to bear, esteem it a privilege, which no consideration will induce them to forego. Were they who live in the neglect of it, frankly to confess the cause of their dislike, they would own it to be the want of inclination, rather than want of conviction, or of opportunity. But, as objections to family prayer assume a more plausible appearance than those vain pleas by which

men silence their consciences in the neglect of other duties, I will take some notice of them.

1st. The first objection to which I shall attend, is, that family prayer is generally neglected; and that too, by some pious men. This is, no doubt, one of those refuges of lies in which many nominal christians intrench themselves, and in which they think themselves secure; judging of their own religion by that of others, rather than by the word of God. This, however, is no reasonable objection, but a very lame excuse for the neglect of this duty, or indeed, of any other whatever. For many duties are generally neglected, none of which, on that account, cease to be such; unless the will and authority of God must be subject to that of men. But the question is, not whether the generality of men practice family religion, but whether or not it be a duty. If it be, it is comparatively of small importance to us, who practices it, or who neglects it. Our rule is, "not to follow the multitude to do evil," not to be conformed to this world. And we are assured that at the great day, this will be no excuse. Besides, this is rather an argument in its favour. Our zeal to practice our duty, should rather be awakened by the smallness of the number of those who practice it; for our obedience, when singular, would be more peculiarly acceptable. And whereas it may be said, that some pious and good men neglect it, I would not positively say that every one who does neglect it, is a wicked man, and in the way to destruction; but, where there is so much evidence that this is a duty, I must be allowed

strongly to suspect his integrity and piety. On such a point however, I would rather use pious Mr. Baxter's words than my own. Having stated the objection, "that many people are against it;" he answers, "I know no such persons; I confess, I once thought some to be good christians that were against family prayer; but now they appear otherwise, not only by this, but by other things. I know none that have cast off these duties, but have taken up vile sins in their stead, and have cast off other duties besides this. Let others observe and judge as they find." Such was the opinion of Mr. Baxter; and it is evident to any considerate mind, that those who neglect family worship have not eminent piety, and in most cases, it appears doubtful whether they have any at all. This is an awful and affecting thought, and one by which those who make such vain excuses, ought in time to be affected. The remark of the pious Bishop Tillotson, is also highly calculated to excite this concern. "The principal part of family religion," says he, "is prayer, every morning and evening, and reading some portion of the scriptures; and this is so necessary to keep alive and to maintain a sense of God and religion in the minds of men, that, where it is neglected, I do not see how any family can in reason be esteemed a family of christians, or indeed have any religion at all."*

* A. B. Tillotson's Sermons, page 596, 4to. edit. Although we do not join in all the severity of this censure, as equally applicable to every family in which social worship is not established; yet the judgment of so great and good a man, should surely alarm such households as carelessly neglect it.

2d. Another objection is, we have no time for family prayer if others have, our many concerns and cares will not admit of it. There is a time for every common purpose of life; and is there yet no time to be employed in securing the great end of life? For what purpose is your time given you? Is it not principally given that you may prepare for eternity?—What would you think of a person who should make this excuse for neglecting his daily food? And yet perhaps, less than half the time you spend in eating and drinking, would be sufficient for the purpose. Again, might you not redeem as much time from idle and trifling conversation, or from sleep, as would be sufficient for family devotion.* Surely a quarter of an hour in the morning, and another in the evening, might be employed in this work. Your business, however large, does not, cannot, exclude every thing of minor importance. Besides, what is this business that you say takes up so much of your time? Is there any business more important than the service of God? You have a great deal to do in the world; but have you not more to do with God than with all the world beside?† Are not your families

* "In the days of our fathers," says Bishop Burnet, "when a person came early to the door of his neighbour, and desired to speak with the master of the house, it was as common a thing for the servants to tell him, with freedom, my master is at prayer, as it is now to say my master is not up."

† Sir Thomas Abney kept up regular prayer in his family during all the time he was Lord Mayor of London; and in the evening of the day he entered on his office, he, without any notice, withdrew from the public assembly at

related to God as his creatures and servants? Are they not constitutions and societies formed for another world at well as for this? Is not religion the "one thing needful?" And are you not dependent upon the divine favour for all your prosperity and happiness? Whose is your time, and whose business have you to do in the world? God's or your own? Is it no part of your business in life to pay God his debts, and discharge your dues to him? Is any worldly care and business so important that you cannot spare a few minutes daily to maintain with heaven a most pleasant intercourse, and most gainful commerce? Is not this indispensable business which you plead, an inordinate, sordid love of money?—"The true reason," says Dr. Barrow, "why family worship is neglected, is, not because men are very busy, but because they are extremely idle; too idle to take any pains to unscrew their

Guildhall, after supper, went to his house, there performed family worship, and then returned to the company.

• "When we consider how profusely he bestows, and how little he requires; that while he confers like Deity, he desires only such poor returns as can be made by indigent mortals: that he requires no costly oblation, nothing that will impoverish, but on the contrary, will inconceivably enrich the giver. When we consider this, we are ready to wonder that he will accept so poor a thing as impotent gratitude for his immense bounty. When we reflect that our very desires to pray to, and thank him are his gifts—that his Son's work and mediation render it acceptable—that he only expects we should consecrate to him what we receive from him—that we should confess that of all we enjoy, nothing is our due, we may well blush at our insensibility." *Mrs. H. More's Character of St. Paul.*

affections from sensible things; to reduce their wandering thoughts, and bring their hearts to a compliance with their duty."

But is it not better in the judgment of solid reason, that the pursuit of affairs of temporal interest should be a little checked, and for a while suspended, rather than that those of everlasting consequence should be totally laid aside?* Is it not

* A pious tradesman, conversing with a minister on family worship, related the following highly interesting and instructive circumstance respecting himself. "When I first began business for myself, I was determined, through grace, to be particularly conscientious with respect to family prayer; accordingly I persevered for many years in the delightful practice of domestic worship. Morning and evening every individual of my family was ordered always to be present, nor would I allow my apprentices to be absent on any account. In a few years the advantage of these engagements appeared manifestly conspicuous; the blessings of the upper and nether springs followed, health and happiness attended my family, and prosperity my business. At length, such was my rapid increase in trade, and the necessity of devoting every possible moment to my customers, that I began to think whether family prayer did not occupy too much of our time in the morning. Pious scruples arose respecting my intention of relinquishing this part of my duty, but at length worldly interest prevailed so far as to induce me to excuse the attendance of my apprentices; and not long after it was deemed advisable for the more eager prosecution of my business, to make the prayer with my wife when we arose in the morning suffice for the day. Notwithstanding the repeated checks of conscience that followed this base omission, the calls of a flourishing concern, and the prospect of an increasing family, appeared so imperious and commanding, that I found an easy excuse for this fatal evil, especially as I did not omit prayer

better that you should impair your substance, rather than endanger your souls? And displease man, rather than offend the Almighty God? It is the

altogether. My conscience was now almost seared as with a hot iron, when it pleased the Lord to awaken me by a singular providence. One day I received a letter from a young man who had formerly been my apprentice, previous to my omitting family prayer; not doubting but I continued domestic worship, his letter was chiefly on this subject, it was couched in the most affectionate and respectful terms; but judge of my surprise and confusion when I read these words, 'O my dear master, never, never shall I be sufficiently able to thank you for the precious privilege with which you indulged me in your family devotion. Oh! Sir, eternity will be too short to praise my God for what I learnt there, it was there that I first beheld my lost and wretched state as a sinner; it was there that I first knew the way of salvation; and there that I first experienced the preciousness of Christ, to me the hope of glory: O! Sir, permit me to say, never, never neglect those precious engagements; you have yet a family and more apprentices, may your house be the birth-place of their souls.' I could read no further, every line flashed condemnation in my face, I trembled, I shuddered, I was alarmed for the blood of my children and apprentices, that I apprehended was to be demanded at my soul-murdering hands! Filled with confusion and bathed in tears, I fled for refuge in secret, I opened the letter before God, I sought and found a sense of his pardoning mercy. The blood of Christ was afresh applied to my disconsolate soul. Immediately I flew to my children, presented them before the Lord, and, from that day to the present, I have been, and am determined through grace, that whenever business becomes too large to permit family prayer, I will give up the superfluous part of it, and retain my devotion. Better to lose a few shillings, than become the deliberate murderer of my family, and the instrument of so much injury to my own soul."

character of a good man, that he "will guide his affairs with discretion," and with a little care and foresight, religion and business will well agree together, so that they shall neither hinder, nor thrust out one or the other. Doth not the immortal spirit justly challenge a large share of our time? Must *eternity*, which comprehends *all time*, have no time belonging to it, or allowed for its vast concerns? It shows a most criminal neglect of the soul, and a most prodigious love of the world, to think that praying time is lost, or that it may be better spent: besides, the more business you and your family have to do in the world, the more need you have of prayer, as it is a mean of engaging the assistance and blessing of God; and as it tends to preserve you from being overcharged with the cares of this life, and entangled with the love of money, which is the root of all evil, and sinks so many into destruction. This then is a groundless objection, to say you have not time to do the will of God in a family capacity, is, in effect saying, that you cannot find time to serve him at all; your time and thoughts being so much engaged in matters of superior importance;—that he is an hard master, and requires impossibilities!

3dly. The next objection to family prayer is, that it is not a Christian duty, being no where commanded in the Scriptures. This is no doubt a secret objection, or rather the pretext of many. But if they would candidly consider the matter, and be as willing to admit the natural conclusion; as they are in many parallel cases, they would no longer

urge such an objection. That there are several duties which devolve on man, but which are not expressly enjoined in the Scriptures, no one can reasonably deny. Many duties, as well as doctrines, are implied in promises, and even in prohibitions: the ten commandments, which are considered as a summary of moral duty, evidently enjoin the opposite of what they forbid; or else why are they called "*commandments*?" To alledge that family prayer is no where expressly commanded, is only what may be said of some other duties: instance the practice of private devotion, which most persons will admit to be a duty, however they neglect to practice it. There is no direct command to pray in secret: but the directions which our Lord has given for the right performance of it, (Matt. vi. 6,) are justly thought to amount to the same thing. And there is equal reason to conclude, that the general precepts, with respect to social religion, include family worship also. We are commanded to pray always, with *all* prayer and supplication; "to pray every where, and in *every* thing to give thanks." Now, there is but one sort of true prayer with which I am acquainted, except as it relates to different seasons and circumstances: prayer is in itself essentially the same, but is called secret, social, or public, according to the number of persons by whom it is presented. If men should pray every where, then certainly they should pray in their families: if men ought in every thing to give thanks, family blessings ought not to remain unacknowledged.

Further, if it be the duty of parents to teach and instruct their children, and to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is it not reasonable that they should also pray with them, and implore the divine blessing on their pious endeavours? Of Abraham, we read that he built an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord; now this was done with his family. For the care he took to promote religion in his domestic circle, he is honoured with the commendation of God himself. "I know him that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment." Take as another example, Joshua, who resolved, that whatever others might do, "he and his house would serve the Lord." Time would fail me to tell of Noah, of Job, of Esther, David, Daniel, and Cornelius, who inhabited those dwellings of Jacob, in which the Lord delighted, those tabernacles of the righteous, where the voice of rejoicing and salvation was heard.

These, with many others that might be mentioned, are the examples of family worship, and the Scripture proofs that it is a duty incumbent upon all heads of families. There are many *precepts*, in which it is plainly included, and some in which it seems evidently to be required. You have also recorded in the Old and New Testaments, the examples of the most eminent persons, whose practice it was, and whose example is set forth for our imitation: Examine these things impartially, and attend to the convictions of your own conscience,

and the result will be a full persuasion, that it is the will of God, that there should be daily worship in every family; and that those who neglect it are criminal in his sight.

Objection 4th. We commonly pray by ourselves night and morning, and our children are taught to do the same: what need then is there of family prayer? To pray privately is certainly a commendable practice, because a commanded duty: but he who prays privately best knows it himself. Private devotion is no public example; and our families are more likely to be influenced by what they see us practice, than by what they hear us profess.* If we are observed every day, imploring the blessing of God upon ourselves, and them, are they not more likely to do it for themselves, than when they are without such an example? The practice of

* Mr. Buck, in his poetical expositor, has the following anecdote. A family which lived next door to the Rev. Mr. S. was sorely visited with the small pox: and there being but a slender partition between the two houses, when Mr. S. engaged in family duty, a woman in the sick family adjoining used to listen as well as she could, and made a hole, that she might hear the more easily. It pleased God, that by what she in this manner heard from Mr. S. in reading and praying, she was so wrought upon, as to become a serious Christian. There is a remarkable circumstance mentioned in the life of Mr. Bailey, a minister of New England, that his mother took him one day, while but young, and called the family together, and made him pray with them. His father, a man of licentious conversation, coming to know how suitably the child had prayed with the family, it smote his soul with great conviction, and proved the beginning of his conversion.

meeting every day to worship the great God, has a tendency to produce the happiest effects, in forming the conduct of our domestics. Frequently to recall the attention of a family to their Creator, tends to impress the members of it, with an idea of his authority, and of their dependence on his providence. It holds forth religion to them as a duty, not of occasional, but daily obligation. The constant reading of the Holy Scriptures, the frequent imploring of the pardon of sin, and petitioning for grace, to be enabled to act aright towards God and man, imperceptibly convey into their minds a knowledge of the duties which they owe to God, to themselves, and to each other.

Remember besides, that as Providence has placed you over an household or family, the souls of your children and servants are committed to your care, and you must one day give a solemn account of your trust. And can you think that you faithfully discharge your duty, while you neglect to maintain the worship of God in your family? Is not your family entirely dependant upon God, as its supporter and benefactor? And ought you not to acknowledge his favours in an a family, as well as in individual capacity? Would you consider it decent and becoming to receive from an earthly benefactor, continual *temporal* support for *yourself* and *family*, without making any acknowledgment of his kindness, or intimating to your family their state of dependence, the obligations under which they were placed, and the dispositions becoming their condition?—You cannot be so dependent on any creature as you are

on Him, who supports all creatures. Should he withdraw his hand, both you and your family would sink into ruin together. Are you not then, obliged in a family capacity, to acknowledge and glorify Him ?

Objection 5th. I have not capacity, nor gift of speech, to pray as I have heard others, nor should I ever acquire sufficient confidence and composure of mind to speak before my family. This objection is answered by the annexed prayers, and by others of a similar kind. But were it otherwise, if you had a proper sense of your real wants, your want of words would not surely hinder you entirely from the performance of this great duty. Did you seriously consider how many family sins need forgiveness, and how many blessings, directions, and comforts need to be asked ; you could not long rest satisfied with such poor excuses. But how can you know that you have no ability to pray before your family, when you have never made the trial ? Begin and continue the practice for one month. If you find at the end of it, you cannot do better than at the first, nor so well as you could wish : If, after several attempts to express your desires to God, to the edification of your family, you experience much hurry and confusion of spirit, take for the present, the advantage of those helps that are provided.*

* It is said of Mr. Rees, that he used his best endeavours that none of his people should live without family worship. He was once endeavouring to prevail with a young professor to begin to pray in his family. The person said he had a great desire to engage in this work ; but he feared he had

Objection 6th. I cannot deny, that all things considered, it is my duty to pray with my family, but I am ashamed to begin, as I know I shall be ridiculed by my neighbours, and perhaps by some of my own household. What your hand findeth to do, and what your bible and your conscience tell you ought to be done, "do, with all your might," "Whether it be right to please God or man, judge ye." Those who would despise you for praying with your family, may be your nearest neighbours, but they are far enough from being your best friends, or their own. Your wife may not, perhaps, be so much against having family worship as you suppose.* And should your servants object to it, you

not sufficient gifts to pray publicly. Mr. Rees said he would write him a prayer, if he would promise to use it. He said he certainly would. The prayer was composed, and the man devoutly used it for some time both morning and evening. But on one occasion as he was reading his prayer, the candle went out. Notwithstanding which, the good man proceeded with great comfort and enlargement, and he found no use for a written prayer ever after.

* Mr. Buck mentions one, who, when he embraced the Gospel, felt a strong desire to introduce family prayer; and though he had not children nor servants to oppose his wishes, he feared his partner in life would not conform to it. One evening as he was walking in the room, reflecting on the sinful omission of a duty, constantly urged by his own conscience, he at length resolved to make the attempt, and began by saying, "How do I wish I could engage in prayer, like those we hear in the vestry;" his wife replied, "why don't you try to pray at home?" "Are you willing I should?" "Willing? certainly." The hindrance which existed in imagination only, immediately vanished; family

are, or ought to be, master of your own house, and should exert that authority which you claim in other cases.* With respect to shame, you have reason, as a professing Christian, to be ashamed of so long neglect of your duty. A duty which you owe to God, your family, and yourself.† It will be your glory to own your former neglect, and you will appear honourable in the sight of God and angels, and in that of all wise and good men. While you neglect it, you are living in sin; for omissions are sins;

prayer was instantly commenced; and through divine goodness, has been continued to this day.—*Buck's Young Christian's Guide*, p. 37.

* The master of the family is the head; with him the authority is lodged; and next to him the wife. The master of the family, (and in case of his absence the wife) is to act as a threefold part. As a prophet he is to instruct his family in the great things of God: as a priest he is to offer up the morning and evening sacrifices of prayer and praise; and as a king, he is to rule over the little dominion, on the throne of which God has placed him. And this power is to be exerted over all his house. And woe be to those members of families that do not submit to all things right and proper. They resist the ordinance of God. *Tyerman*.

† Shall I blush to be found prostrate before the throne of grace? Shall I be ashamed to have it known that I offer up social supplications in the family, or am conscientious in observing my private retirements? Rather let me glory in this unspeakable privilege. Let me reckon it the most noble posture to fall low on my knees before his footstool; and the highest honour to enjoy communion with his most exalted majesty. Incomparably more noble than to sit in person on the triumphal chariot, or to stand in effigy amidst the temple of worthies.—*Hervey's Meditations*, p. 277.

and "the servant that knoweth his Lord's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." If you still plead this shame, pray consider how shame will be estimated at the great day. Then you shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt. To be hurried away from the bright and glorious presence of the blessed God, as the punishment of one that would not call upon him; to be separated from angels, and from the spirits of just men made perfect, and to be an associate with devils and wicked men ! When it is asked, why he is driven into darkness, and cast into those regions where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth ? The answer must be, he would not call upon God. He had a family, but there was no religion in it; he never cared to keep up God's interest in his earthly station.* Think then, my Reader, whether this will not be a greater shame than to begin a holy religious course of life, that has been long and shamefully neglected ? Finally, the most effectual means of conquering this ill-grounded and sinful shame, is immediately to begin to pray with your family ; for by so doing, you would soon overcome every difficulty, and perhaps others, by your example, might be ashamed of neglecting it, "and † glorify God in the day of visita-

* Howe.

† Dr. Witherspoon mentions in one of his sermons, a little piece of private history : A gentleman of very considerable fortune, but a stranger to either personal or family religion, one evening took a solitary walk through a part of his own grounds. He happened to come near a mean hut, where a poor man with a numerous family lived, who earned their

tion." Thus you would not be overcome of evil, but you would overcome evil with good. But if, on the other hand, you will not determine to acknowledge and worship God in your family, till you can obtain the permission, and secure the approbation of the ungodly for so doing, then I venture to say, you will never do it at all.

bread by daily labour. He heard a voice pretty loud and continued; not knowing what it was, curiosity prompted him to listen. The man, who was piously disposed, happened to be at prayer with his family. As soon as he could distinguish the words, he heard him giving thanks with great affection to God for the goodness of his providence, in giving food to eat, and raiment to put on, and in supplying him with what was necessary and comfortable for the present life. He was immediately (no doubt by divine power) struck with astonishment and confusion; and said to himself, does this poor man, who has nothing but the meanest fare, and that purchased by hard labour, give thanks to God for his goodness to himself and family, and I, who enjoy ease and honour, and every thing that is grateful and desirable, have hardly ever bent my knee, or made any acknowledgment to my Maker and Preserver. It pleased God that this providential occurrence proved the means of bringing him to a real and lasting sense of God and religion.

CHAPTER X.

Directions for the right performance of Family Devotion.

A FEW directions with respect to family worship, will not be unacceptable to such as are, by divine grace, determined upon the practice of it; to such, I would say,

1st. As the work in which you have engaged is of great importance, and calls for a great measure of prudence, seriousness, and resolution; you would do well to look up to God for his guidance, and for all needful assistance towards discharging it rightly and profitably. Pray that he would impress your mind with a due sense of the importance of this duty to your family and yourself; and that he would enable you to have his glory constantly in view, in the performance of each * part of it. Seek

* "Those do well," said pious Philip Henry, "that pray morning and evening in their family; those do better that pray and read the Scriptures, but those do best of all that pray, and read, and sing: and Christians 'should covet earnestly the best gifts.' The Rev. Job Orton in a letter to a young clergyman, in which he quotes his 'Religious Exercises,' says, I would inculcate upon all families, where it can be performed, the use of psalmody; and then I give my reasons; meaning where it can be performed decently, by a suf-

strength from heaven to conquer that sinful shame and unmanly cowardice which would hinder you in the performance of this good work. Earnestly pray in secret that God would give you wisdom and re-

ficient number, and capable of tolerable singing ; and prudently, on account of the situation and vicinity. Is there any thing to be objected to in this? Mr. ——— is mistaken as to what he says of singing low, 'it may be quite harmonious, and yet no louder than the common key of reading.' One or two facts are worth a thousand theories and suppositions. I have always lived in families where singing was used ; and I never found nor heard of any inconveniences attending the practice of it, in my father's family at Shrewsbury, though he lived in a narrow street, and which was the greatest thoroughfare in the town ; or neither of Dr. Doddridge's houses at Northampton, or at my own house at Shrewsbury, or many other houses here. One may have a worse opinion of men than they deserve. Let religious families first make a trial, and then proceed ; or drop the exercise, as they find it convenient or otherwise. 'Let not your good be evil spoken of,' is an excellent rule. But if what is good in itself must be omitted for fear of that, there is an end of all goodness. A pious farmer of my congregation used to sing as well as read and pray in his family. His reprobate landlord who lived near him hath come with his rakish companions, and contrasted the psalm with a horse-laugh, and an indecent song. The squire's son, who is now a serious man, has acknowledged to the farmer's widow, that the conduct of his father, &c., shocked him when a boy ; and that the steadiness of the farmer, and his consistent behaviour in other instances, had a great influence in giving his mind a serious turn. When vice is bold, it is sad that virtue and piety should be sneaking. 'Till I see, or hear of some well attested instances in which the credit of religion has suffered by singing in families consistently religious, the practice must stand."

solution to discharge your duty. In doing this, you may expect the blessing of God upon you, and all that direction and assistance which he has promised. (Prov. iii. 6; Zech. xii. 10; Matt. vii. 7.)

2dly. Embrace that hour for morning and evening worship which is most convenient and best suited to your business and condition in life. Some families have but little interruption; their circumstances will easily permit them to fix a particular hour for worship. Yet even these may at times be prevented by some unexpected occurrence from observing the time appointed. When this is not the case, such families may make trifling matters stand by till worship is performed. There are other families which cannot fix upon any particular hour, they are so situated as to render it impossible without great inconvenience. In this case, which is not a very common one, their concern should not be so much about the time, as the worship itself, and the manner in which it is performed. Great care however is needful on both sides, to guard against formality on the one hand, and negligence on the other. Here I beg leave to be a little more particular, and to add a few words of Mr. Haywood's on the subject. "As to family religion in the morning," says he, "whether it appears most fit and proper to call the family together as soon as possible, or, to defer it till after we have refreshed animal nature, and set down as a family to our morning meal? The first certainly seems the most suitable; yet all families are not in the same circumstances, and therefore cannot do alike. I would not by this encourage you

to an indifference, or to a neglect of these duties, but leave it to your prudence as to the time. Seriously weigh the matter, and if you can, call the family together, or as many as can be spared from the necessary affairs of life, let it be done as soon as possible; because your minds are then most free from distraction. But if you should meet with unexpected interruptions, yet do not neglect the worship, but watch the first opportunity to attend to it. As to the evening worship, care should also be taken that it be not put off to an unseasonable hour.* If you have your evenings in general to yourselves, it appears fittest to worship God before the evening meal; then your spirits are free, and your bodies have least fatigue; whereas, if you defer it till the

* Scarcely any practice contributes to occasion the late performance, and even the total neglect of family duty among Christians, more than late visiting. This practice might with more propriety be excused (or rather not be deemed a fault) in single persons, and those who have no society at home. But such as are at the head of a family, have a little church and congregation committed to them, and should not quit their post without some providential call so to do. It is said of the pious Dr. Ford, that he was averse from much visiting, especially from receiving or paying ceremonious visits. His general answer to solicitations of this kind, was, "I never go out to dinner for my souls' sake, nor to supper for my body's sake." His advice to a very respectable man, who was then just entering on the business of life, expresses the maxim on which he himself acted, and deserves the attention of the heads of families in general. "Make it a point said he, never to ask company to supper; it will interrupt the course of family worship, and unfit you for communion with God."

last hour, you may be rendered unfit for it by the hurries of the day; and your family wanting rest, may think it rather burdensome, instead of joining in it with a degree of pleasure and willingness. This will be to offer the halt and the lame in sacrifice to God: therefore avoid this if you can. If your evenings are not your own, you must then embrace that time which providence offers you, and use that prudence which becomes your characters as Christians.

3dly. Take care to perform this duty with great seriousness. Never perform it in a hurry. Guard against slothfulness * or negligence, and every thing

* Nothing is more injurious to the Christian than indolence, and yet scarce any evil is more common. This vice is one of the most natural to men, whether good or bad. In the men of the world, its influence may be considerably counteracted by the love of earthly things, in the pursuit of which, they will often do violence to themselves. A man of this sort, may, by the influence of avaricious principles, be induced to industrious exertions, notwithstanding his propensity to idleness. Nor do such characters love to hear the pleas of the slothful; but often express their disapprobation of them in the strongest terms. This they do, not so much from a love of labour, as of gain; which self ignorance often confounds together.—But to the Christian, indolence is peculiarly injurious. The objects of his pursuits are infinitely more valuable, and in the neglect of them he suffers a serious loss. And yet how often do men manifest a readiness to imbibe those notions in religion which are most favourable to their love of ease! “Upon this principle,” (says Mr. Jay,) “many are influenced in their choice of preachers, and in their adoption of sentiments. This makes them fonder of speculations which bear very softly upon the heart and life, than of those truths which inculcate a holy practice. They find it easier to hear weekly a number of sermons,

that has a tendency to dishonour God, and give those around any trifling thoughts of religion. Remember yourself, and let your domestics learn from your behaviour that "God is greatly to be feared in *all* the assemblies of his saints, and to be held in reverence by all that approach him." Take care that the behaviour of yourself and your family, not only during worship, but also in coming to it, and going from it, be decent and solemn. Sharply reprove, and if that will not do, correct every indecency of your children and servants in the time of worship. Remember to whom you are about to speak. Let your minds be engaged in the great work, and "do it heartily as unto the Lord." You had better trifle any where than at prayer; better affront any one than the great and holy God. "Cursed be the deceiver, that hath a mule in his flock, and vows and sacrifices unto the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen."

4thly. Let your language be plain and simple, such as *all* the members of the family can understand. The most plain and familiar expressions, provided they are grave and serious, are best suited for prayer, most intelligible to those that join in it, and are on this account the most impressive.*

than to teach their children the truths and duties of the Gospel, and to maintain serious devotion in their families and in their closets."

* It is to be regretted that many persons who engage in family, or in social worship, are observed to speak with so

Propriety and elegance of expression, and even sublimity of language, are not in themselves improper; as we cannot speak to God in terms too high for his dignity. Indeed when such expressions are used in adoring the great God, they have a tendency to awaken and keep up in our minds suitable dispositions of reverential awe; but all this depends upon their being understood. What might be proper at the dedication of Solomon's Temple, or in a social or public meeting, might yet be very unsuitable at the family altar; and even in social worship, how often is the serious and pious mind disgusted with gaudy flowers of rhetoric, and the absence of that artless simplicity which ought to characterise our address to the throne of grace.* What can be more improper in the language of sinful creatures, when expressing the desires of their hearts, to the

low and depressed a voice; and especially to utter the concluding words of a sentence, so as not be heard without great difficulty, even by those who are nearest to them. This is an evil whenever it occurs, but more especially at the commencement of the prayer, as it often prevents our comfortably joining in the other parts of it with him who is a mouth to speak to God for the rest. It is very justly remarked by Mr. Newton, that, "those persons who cannot speak so as to be heard, might as well altogether hold their peace."

* Nothing has, perhaps, contributed to deter young christians from attempting any thing in this way, more than that affected sublimity which they have observed in the prayers of others. Those therefore who would encourage their brethren to pray in their families and in the church, when met for that purpose, should be concerned to exhibit the plainest and most easy examples for their imitation.

hearer of prayer, than these studied and oratorical supplications, which smell of the lamp of human art, rather than the fire of divine grace, and which are sometimes to be heard in our assemblies, from men who should offer up the prayer of faith in the *name* as well as in the *behalf* of the worshipping people.—Guard then against the temptation to speak to God in any shining language, that may be above the understanding of your family. If you use free or extempore prayer, make the Psalms and other devotional parts of scripture familiar to your mind : we cannot speak to God in any words better than his own.*

5thly. Beware of being too long in your family devotions. This is a very important consideration, and the neglect of it has armed many with an ob-

* That divine Spirit which indited the inspired volume, has taken care that we should never be at a loss for materials for devotion. Not a prophet or apostle but has more or less contributed to the sacred fund. The writings of St. Paul, especially, are rich with petition, abundant in thanksgiving, overflowing in praises. The Psalms of David have enlarged the medium of intercourse between earth and heaven ; they have supplied to all ages materials for christian worship under every supposable circumstance of life ; they have facilitated the means of negotiation for the penitent ; and of gratitude for the pardoned. They have provided confession for the contrite, consolation for the broken hearted, invitation for the weary, and rest for the heavy laden. They have furnished petitions for the needy, praise for the grateful, and adoration for all. However indigent in himself, no one can complain of want who has access to such a magazine of intellectual treasure.—*Mrs. H. More's Character of St. Paul.*

jection to them, if not with an argument against them. Here prudence is to be exercised, and the persons with whom you are praying are to be considered.—A quarter of an hour with life and spirit is a great deal better than an hour spent in tedious repetitions: let not your service be long, but lively, for God regards not the length of your prayer, but the life of it. When Cicero was asked which of Demosthenes' orations he thought the best, he wittily replied, the longest: but if the question should be, which of prayers is the best, the answer then must not be the longest, but the strongest; not the prayer that exceeds in quantity, but that which excels in quality. In moral actions, the manner of working is a swaying circumstance: a man may sin in doing good, but not in doing well. Extraordinary occasions may sometimes require an enlargement; in such cases, the frame of your minds must be regarded more than a few minutes of time. Our prayers may be ended before our hearts are warmed, and they may continue till they are grown cold again;* both these evils, should, if possible, be avoided.

* It is said of the pious Cornelius Winter, that his family worship was early both morning and evening; and that he was never tiresome in the performance of it. He often mentioned, that Mr. Whitefield being at a friend's house, the master of the family one evening prayed himself: he was immoderately long. In the middle of the prayer, Mr. Whitefield rose up and sat down in the chair; and when the long-winded gentleman had done, said to him with a frown, "Sir, you prayed me into a good frame, and you prayed me out of it again."—*Jay's Life of Winter.*

6thly. Endeavour that the great ends of family worship be answered, and the good effects of it be manifested in the whole of your conversation. See that you do not rest in the outward form religion. If you desire God's blessing on your worldly concerns, let honesty, diligence, prudence, and frugality appear in all your conduct. That a house of prayer should be a house of riot and intemperance; that there should sometimes be cursing, profane, scurrilous, obscene, or bitter words; that there should be prayer in the house, and cheating in the shop, or oppression in the field; how monstrous is this! That those who daily pray together should be quarrelsome, froward, and peevish one to another; that the master of a praying family should tyrannize over his wife or children, and treat his servants with insolence or abuse; what a shameful inconsistency is here! I hope and believe, such inconsistencies and irregularities are seldom found: but a caution on this head can never be unseasonable. Therefore take great care that you do not make religious services appear contemptible, "and cause the offering of the Lord to be abhorred." See that you and your families live in love, "that your prayers be not hindered;" and that, having begun the day with prayer, you "be in the fear of the Lord all day long." Let religion attend you, wherever you go, and give a tincture to all your words and actions. "Men," says Mr. Henry, "will judge of religion by the behaviour of those who profess it. Though the children of this world know little of faith, repentance, and prayer; yet

they are competent judges of honest bargains, and fair open dealings; they are often themselves careful in these things, and therefore, they who profess religion, should 'walk very circumspectly, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.'"

Be concerned then, for the glory of God, and let the worth and welfare of the souls of your family be ever upon your thoughts. Pray for them and yourself, like one in good earnest; and endeavour to walk every day agreeably to your profession and your prayers. Thus dedicating your house to God, resolve to offer daily the sacrifice of prayer and of praise to his name, saying with Moses, "The Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation; he is my God, and I will prepare for him an habitation, my father's God, and I will exhalt him:"—He will look down with complacency, and say, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel which call upon my name, and they shall be my people." (Exodus xv. 2; Jer. xxx. 21, 22, and xxx. 1.)

END OF THE FIRST PART.

HYMNS

SUITED TO

DOMESTIC WORSHIP.

PART THE SECOND.

Lord's Day Morning.

HYMN I.

- 1 INSPIRE my tongue, immortal King,
To bless thy glorious name ;
And warm my bosom while I sing,
With love's celestial flame.
- 2 Once more the sacred morning smiles ;
My soul the blessing greet ;
It calls thee from inferior toils ;
To rest divinely sweet.
- 3 Thus far thine hand has brought me through ;
Nor will thy love decline,
From those who to thy precepts bow,
And in thy service join.

- 4 Encourag'd by thy faithful word,
I'll to thy courts repair,
To number o'er thy mercies Lord,
And worship in thy fear.
- 5 O give me, Lord, the hearing ear,
An heart that understands ;
A soul that does thy will revere,
And follows its commands.
-

HYMN II.

- 1 To thy temple I repair,
Lord ! I love to worship there,
When within the veil I meet
Christ upon the mercy seat.
- 2 Thou through Him art reconcil'd ;
I through him become thy child ;
Abba ! Father ! give me grace,
In thy courts to seek thy face.
- 3 While thy glorious praise is sung,
Touch my lips, unloose my tongue ;
That my joyful soul may bless
Thee, my Lord, my righteousness.
- 4 While the prayers of saints ascend,
God of love to mine attend ;
Hear me—for thy Spirit pleads,
Hear, for Jesus intercedes.

- 5 While thy word is read with awe,
May I tremble at thy law,
'Till thy Gospel bring to me,
Life and immortality.
- 6 While thy ministers proclaim
Peace and pardon in thy name ;
Through their voice, by faith, may I
Hear thee speaking from the sky.
- 7 From thine house when I return,
May my heart within me burn ;
And at evening let me say,
“ I have walk'd with God to day.”

HYMN III.

- 1 WELCOME Sabbath, sacred day !
Cheering is thy morning ray,
When the servants of the Lord
Meet to pray and hear his word.
- 2 Welcome Sabbath, day of rest,
Far above all others blest ;
When our God Immanuel rose !
Thee from all the rest he chose.
- 3 Welcome Sabbath, day of peace,
May thy love still increase ;
Thousands have in thy short space
Felt the power of quick'ning grace.

- 4 Welcome Sabbath, day to prove
Heavenly rest and joys above :
Such as when this life is o'er
Saints enjoy for evermore.

HYMN IV.

Lord's Day Evening.

- 1 O HAPPY souls who dwell above,
In God's immediate sight,
They glow with everlasting love,
And shine divinely bright.
- 2 O what a Sabbath they enjoy,
Now free from every sin ;
While Jesus' praise is their employ,
And endless love their theme.
- 2 O may I breathe that heav'nly air,
And feast on joys divine ;
And sing and praise my Saviour there,
And in his glories shine.
- 4 Thy presence beams eternal day
O'er all the blissful place ;
Who would not drop this load of clay,
And die to see his face !

HYMN V.

- 1 **WHEN, O dear Jesus, when shall I
Behold thee all serene ;
Bless'd in perpetual Sabbath day,
Without a veil between.**
- 2 **Assist me while I wander here,
Amidst a world of care ;
Incline my heart to pray with love,
And then accept my prayer.**
- 3 **Release my soul from every chain,
No more hell's captive led ;
And pardon a repenting child,
For whom the Saviour bled.**
- 4 **Spare me, my God, O spare the soul
That gives itself to thee ;
Take all that I possess below,
And give thyself to me.**
- 5 **Thy Spirit, O my Father, grant,
To be my guide and friend,
To light my way to ceaseless joys,
Where Sabbaths never end.**

HYMN VI.

- 1 How lovely are thy courts, O Lord,
How sweet thy dwelling place ;
When thou dost bless the gospel word,
And show thy gracious face !
- 2 While Jesus in his chariot rides,
And truth and mercy brings ;
My heart will taste no joys besides,
And nauseates earthly things.
- 3 One savoury day in his house spent,
More sweetness yieldeth far,
Than thousands pass'd in merriment,
Or than whole ages are.
- 4 The gospel word may Jesus bless,
To quicken sinners dead ;
To give thy children growth in grace,
And raise the mourner's head.
- 5 Refresh my soul with thy sweet love,
Well water'd let it be ;
And soaring up to things above,
Cry out and thirst for thee.
- 6 Let each new Sabbath bring new rest,
New faith and love impart,
Give sweeter joy within my breast,
And hallow more my heart.

HYMN VII.

- 1 INFINITE sums of gratitude
I owe to thee my gracious God,
Whose bounty doth my griefs beguile
By mingling comforts with my toil.
- 2 This day thy table has been spread
With costly wines and living bread,
Treasures of grace to sinners given,
And starry crowns reserv'd in heaven.
- 3 The comfort which thy Gospel brings
Surpasses far created things ;
Nor would I envy those who share
In sinful ease and sumptuous fare.
- 4 With showers divine and cheering rays
Refresh the gardens of thy grace ;
Nor may the trees by patience prun'd,
Be fruitless in the vineyard found !
- 5 For blessings civil and divine
May I my grateful praises join ;
For food and raiment, health and friends,
And all thy sweet compassion sends.
- 6 Now let thy pardons be renew'd,
And wash my duties in thy blood,
That Lord, beneath thy smile I may
Close up the evening of thy day !

HYMN VIII.

- 1 How quick the sabbath's roll away !
How fast we hasten to that day,
When all our sabbath's here shall end,
And we to Christ our judge ascend.
- 2 May we our sabbath's here improve
As those who look for rest above;
And when from death's strong hold we break,
Our Christ to us these accents speak :—
- “ Ye happy souls triumphant come,
“ Enter your bless'd eternal home,
“ For you my friends that rest's design'd ;
“ Now come and feed on joys refin'd.
- 4 “ Pass on to join my service there,
“ And in my choicest favours share ;
“ I'll dwell with you, and you shall reign
“ For ever freed from sin and pain.”
-

HYMN IX.

- 1 My soul can'st thou no higher rise,
To meet thy God than this ?
Yet Lord, accept my sacrifice,
Defective as it is.

- 2 Give me thyself the only good,
And ever with me stay ;
Whose faithful mercies are renew'd
With each returning day.
- 3 Oh ! guide me with a Father's eye,
Nor from my soul depart ;
But let the day-star from on high
Illuminate my heart.
- 4 This night preserve me without sin,
Unspotted in thy ways ;
And hear me while I usher in
The welcome morn with praise.
- 5 Far as the east from west remove
Each earthly vain desire ;
And raise me on the wings of love,
O raise me daily higher.
-

HYMN X.

Joshua's Resolution.

- 1 To love and serve my God,
How great the honour is !
My feet through grace have trod
This path to heavenly bliss,
Bless'd day, the day when Angels heard,
" I and my house will serve the Lord."

2 Men's idol deities

Form'd out of wood and stone,
Are altogether lies,
They can't for sin atone,
While they that make them leave thy word,
"I and my house will serve the Lord."

3 Invited by thy love,

My little flock draws nigh ;
Children and servants move
At mercy's feet to lie ;
I, and my house with one accord,
Unite to seek and serve the Lord.

4 How highly favour'd they

Who their obedience prove,
Who read, and praise, and pray,
And speak of Jesus' love ;
Fired with his charms they tune the chord
In sweetest strains to serve the Lord.

5 Far from the shades of hell,

And near the gates of bliss,
Are they who love to dwell,
In pious families ;
In hope to share the great reward,
They join to seek and serve the Lord.

HYMN XI.

1 **OFF** as I lay me down to rest,
O may the reconciling word

Sweetly compose my weary breast,
While on the bosom of my Lord :
I sink in blissful dreams away,
And visions of eternal day.

- 3 Rising to sing my Saviour's praise,
Thee may I publish all day long,
And let thy precious word of grace
Flow from my heart and fill my tongue ;
Fill all my life with purest love,
And join me to thy church above.

HYMN XII.

- 1 CONTENT with my lot will I pass
The days of my pilgrimage here ;
Rejoice at the presage of death,
And smile at eternity near.
- 2 Since Jesus is mine, and his love
No change nor abatement can know,
Secure of the blessings above,
I triumph in dangers below.
- 3 Should spirits malign and the world
Their efforts together unite,
I trust in Immanuel's arm
And conquer I shall in his might.
- 4 Whene'er the grim messenger, death,
Shall call me from earth to remove,
A building I have in the skies,
A mansion eternal above.

HYMN XIII.

A sanctified Household.

- 1 FAIR would I Lord, my household lead,
In all the paths of righteousness,
And train them up as holy seed,
To serve thy will and spread thy praise.
 - 2 Implant in me the patriarch's mind,
My sacred cares and toils approve ;
And bless the church I leave behind,
The children of my faith and love.
-

HYMN XIV.

- 1 HAPPY the christian family,
Where love and joy abound ;
It rises like a lofty tree
With living foliage crown'd.
- 2 With verdant leaf, with tow'ring head
The parent stem shall grow ;
His branches all around him spread,
His root deep fix'd below.
- 3 No blight shall hurt the tender shoot,
Nor wasting drought destroy ;
No secret worm shall nip the root,
Nor blossom of his joy.

- 4 From day to day, from year to year
The stately tree shall rise ;
'Till gather'd from this earthly sphere,
'Till planted in the skies.
- 5 There with its tendrils winding round,
The eternal plant shall thrive ;
Nor age, nor death, shall curse that ground,
While God himself shall live.
-

HYMN XV.

- 1 FATHER of men, thy care we bless,
Which crowns our families with peace ;
From thee they spring, and by thy hand,
Their root and branches are sustain'd.
- 2 To God, most worthy to be prais'd,
Be our domestic altars rais'd ;
Who Lord of heaven, scorns not to dwell,
With saints in their obscurest cell.
- 3 To thee may each united house,
Morning and night present its vows ;
Our servants and our rising race,
Be taught thy precepts and thy grace.
- 4 O may each future age proclaim,
Thy honours of thy glorious name ;
While pleas'd and thankful we remove,
To join the family above.

HYMN XVI.

Morning Hymn.

- 1 ONCE more, my soul, the pleasing light
Salutes thy waking eyes ;
Once more thy mercies, Lord, invite
My grateful sacrifice.
- 2 What numbers have resign'd their breath,
Since the last closing day !
While mine has been preserv'd from death,
As much expos'd as they.
- 3 Whilst numbers with diseases pain'd,
Have counted every hour ;
My flesh in slumbers safe remain'd
Beneath thy shelt'ring pow'r.
- 4 While thousands for these gifts bestow'd,
Ne'er bend the grateful knee,
May I, O my preserving God !
Devote my life to thee.
- 5 O may I ever walk and live,
Dependent on thy care ;
Who ever wilt thy blessing give,
To diligence and prayer.
- 6 O may thy statutes be my guide,
And to my labours join,
An heart content and satisfied,
A will resign'd to thine !

HYMN XVII.

- 1 O God of Jacob, by whose hand
Thine Israel still is fed ;
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.
 - 2 To thee our humble vows we raise,
To thee address our prayer ;
And in thy kind and faithful breast,
Deposit all our care.
 - 3 If thou through our perplexing path
Wilt be our constant guide ;
If thou wilt daily bread supply,
And raiment wilt provide.
 - 4 If thou wilt spread thy shield around,
'Till these our wand'rings cease ;
And at our Father's lov'd abode,
Our souls arrive in peace.
 - 5 To thee, as to our cov'nant God,
We'll our whole selves resign ;
And count that not our tenth alone,
But *all* we have is thine.
-

HYMN XVIII.

- '1 God of my life, my morning song
To thee I cheerful raise ;
Thy acts of love 'tis good to sing,
And pleasant 'tis to praise.
- 2 Preserv'd by thy almighty arm,
I pass the shades of night,
Secure and safe from every harm,
To see the morning light.
- 3 While numbers spend their nights in sighs
And restless pains and woes,
In gentle sleep I close my eyes,
And rise from sweet repose.
- 4 When sleep, death's image o'er me spread,
And I unconscious lay,
Thy watchful eye was round my bed,
To guard my feeble clay.
- 5 O let the same almighty care
Through all this day attend ;
From every danger, every snare,
My heedless steps defend.
- 6 Smile on my minutes as they roll,
And guide my future days ;
And let thy goodness fill my soul
With gratitude and praise.

HYMN XIX.

Evening Hymns.

- 1 Now from the altar of our hearts,
Let flames of love arise ;
Assist us, Lord, to offer up
Our ev'ning sacrifice.
 - 2 Awake our love, awake our joy,
Awake our heart and tongue ;
Sleep not when mercies loudly call,
Break forth into a song.
 - 3 Minutes and mercies multiplied
Have made up all this day ;
Minutes come quick, but mercies were
More fleet and free than they.
 - 4 New time, new savour, and new joys,
Do a new song require ;
'Till we shall praise thee as we would,
Accept our heart's desire.
 - 5 Lord of our time, whose hand hath set
New time upon our score ;
Thee may we praise for all our time,
When time shall be no more.
-

HYMN XX.

Saturday Evening.

- 1 SAFELY through another week,
God has brought us on our way ;
Let us now a blessing seek
On the approaching sabbath day ;
Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.
 - 2 Mercies multiply'd each hour,
Through the week our praise demand :
Guarded by almighty power,
Fed and guarded by his hand ;
Though ungrateful we have been,
Only made returns of sin.
 - 3 While we pray for pard'ning grace,
Through the dear Redeemer's name,
Show thy reconciled face,
Shine away our sin and shame ;
From our worldly cares set free,
May we rest this night with thee.
-

OCCASIONAL HYMNS.

HYMN XXI.

On going to a new Habitation.

- 1 WHERE'ER the Lord shall build my house,
An altar to his name I'll raise ;
There morn and ev'ning shall ascend
The sacrifice of prayer and praise.

- 2 If num'rous blessings of the earth,
Indulgent God to us afford :
With warm united hearts we'll pay
Our grateful tribute to the Lord.
 - 3 Here fix, dear Lord, thy sacred rest,
And spread the banner of thy love ;
'Till, ripen'd for the heavenly world,
We rise and join the church above.
-

HYMN XXII.

On settling in a new Habitation.

- 1 Now let our hearts their glory wake,
The sacred song to raise ;
And every tuneful pow'r combine
To shout Jehovah's praise.
- 2 To us our goodly heritage,
His providence assigns ;
And in this safe and pleasant place,
Marks out our happy lines.
- 3 Come, let us to his holy name,
A grateful altar raise ;
And be this habitation stil'd,
The house of prayer and praise.

HYMN XXIII.

For a Family Meeting.

- 1 As spices mingled with our food,
Give flavor to the feast ;
So holy pleasure ever should
Refresh and cheer the guest.
 - 2 To feed the gross corporeal frame,
And starve the noble mind,
Dishonoreth the Christian name,
And leaves no zest behind.
 - 3 If saints in social circles meet,
Like relatives of old ;
Sure some should sit at Jesu's feet,
Or else his truth unfold.
 - 4 This is the true support of life,
Provision for our souls ;
This kindles love, and quenches strife,
And prejudice controuls.
 - 5 Feed us, O Lord, with holy truth,
While o'er this waste we roam ;
Till parents, children, age, and youth,
Shall meet in Canaan's home.
-

HYMN XXIV.

On Friends' Meeting.

- 1 To thee, O God, to thee belongs
The tribute of our grateful songs;
Thy goodness infinite demands
Devoted hearts and lifted hands.
- 2 Our lives a forfeit long have been
To death, the just desert of sin;
But oh! thy clemency forbears,
And lengthens out our wasting years.
- 3 The subjects of thy parent grace
We now appear before thy face;
O look with eyes propitious down,
And bless our friendship with thy own.
- 4 O make us of one heart and mind;
To sympathy and love inclin'd;
Averse to riot and excess,
The duteous sons of holiness.
- 5 Then will our friendly union be
Delightful to ourselves and thee;
Like fragrant oil, which trickles down
O'er Aaron's robes from Aaron's crown.
- 6 Command a blessing, gracious Lord,
On all who now attend thy word;
The willing ear and heart incline,
And let it prove a feast divine.

HYMN XXV.

At Friends' Parting.

- 1 THROUGH Christ when we together came,
In singleness of heart,
We meet, O Jesus, in thy name,
And in thy name we part.
- 2 We part in body, not in mind,
Our minds continue one ;
And each to each in Jesus join'd,
We happily go on.
- 3 Present in spirit still we are,
And intimately nigh ;
While on the wings of faith and prayer,
We Abba ! Father, cry.
- 4 O may thy Spirit, dearest Lord,
In all our travels still
Direct, and be our constant guard
To Zion's holy hill.
- 5 O what a joyful meeting there,
Beyond these changing shades !
White are the robes we then shall wear,
And crowns upon our heads.
- 6 Haste, Lord, and bring us to the day,
When we shall dwell at home ;
Come, O Redeemer, come away,
O Jesus, quickly come !

HYMN XXVI.

- 1 SWEET the time, exceeding sweet,
When the saints together meet ;
When the Saviour is the theme,
When they join to sing of him.
- 2 Sweet the state, exceeding sweet,
When the saints in glory meet ;
Where the Saviour's all the theme,
There we'll ever sing of Him.
-

HYMN XXVII.

Hymn for a New Year.

- 1 SEE, our days and years are hast'ning,
Swift they bear us to the tomb ;
Every hour our sands are less'ning,
Fast draws near the gen'ral doom.
O be ready ;
Christ the Judge will quickly come.
- 2 Think of life, how weak and feeble !
Sinners, now attend and fear ;
To resist God who is able ?
Each at judgment must appear.
O be wise then ;
Seek the Lord while he is near.

- 3 Make us wise unto salvation,
As our days and months grow less ;
Pardon all our great transgression ;
Send our guilty spirits peace,
God of mercy !
Thro' the riches of thy grace.
- 4 Give thy presence, blessed Jesus ;
Help thy name to sanctify ;
From a death in sin O raise us,
Lord, in thee to live and die.
Then go to thee,
Endless pleasures to enjoy.
-

HYMN XXVIII.

Saturday Night.

- 1 BEGONE my worldly cares away !
Nor dare to tempt my sight ;
Let me begin the' ensuing day
Before I end this night.
- 2 Yes, let the work of prayer and praise
Employ my heart and tongue ;
Begin my soul ! the sabbath days
Can never be too long.
- 3 Let the past mercies of the week
Excite a grateful frame :
Nor let my tongue refuse to speak
Some good of Jesu's name.

- 4 Jesus! how pleasing is the sound,
 How worthy of my love!
 Why is my heart so lifeless found?
 Why plac'd no more above?
- 5 Forgive my dullness, dearest Lord,
 And quicken all my powers;
 Prepare me to attend thy word,
 To improve the sacred hours.
- 6 Direct the shepherds how to feed
 The flocks of thine own choice;
 Give savour to the heavenly bread,
 And bid the folds rejoice.
-

HYMN XXIX.

On going to Bed.

- 1 'Tis here I lay me down to rest,
 And cease from all my care;
 'Tis here I make my last request
 To God that heareth prayer.
- 2 Here I'm secure, if he be near
 To guard my soul from harm;
 Nor need I any evil fear,
 Or start at death's alarm.
- 3 Tho' midnight darkness veil the place,
 While here I ask a boon;
 If Jesus show his smiling face,
 'Twill all be bright as noon.

- 4 O may I seek the heavenly way,
Nor care for ought beneath ;
Embrace salvation while 'tis day,
And gladly welcome death.
-

HYMN XXX.

Afflictions.

- 1 AFFLICTIONS spring not from the earth,
Nor of blind chance arise ;
'Tis sin that gives the numerous birth
Of human maladies.
- 2 Yet these are servants, Lord, to thee,
Beneath thy ruling hand ;
Legions of fierce diseases fly,
Or come at thy command.
- 3 Not one of all the griefs we feel,
But notic'd is in heaven ;
Weigh'd out with an unerring skill,
And in compassion giv'n.
- 4 Why should the living then complain,
Or murmur out of hell ?
Can sufferings outweigh our sins ?
Oh, 'tis impossible.

- 5 Submissive may we then endure
Our lot of chastisement ;
A sov'reign antidote to cure,
Our evils to prevent.
- 6 We would be, Lord, to thee resign'd,
But oh ! our wayward will
Prevents the gracious end design'd,
And leaves us murmur'ing still.
- 7 O may we then receive the stroke,
Nor wish it to decline ;
'Till our rebellious will is broke,
And melted into thine.
-

HYMN XXXI.

- 1 UNITED prayers ascend to thee,
Eternal Parent of mankind ;
Smile on each waiting family,
Thy face we seek, and let us find.
- 2 The father of the household bless,
The priest, the patriarch let him move,
That all his family may trace
In him thy law, in lines of love.
- 3 Regard the mother's anxious tears,
Her heart's desire, her earnest prayers ;
And while her infant charge she rears,
Crown with success her pious cares.

- 4 Let the dear pledges of their love,
Like tender plants around them grow;
Thy present grace and joys above,
Upon their little ones bestow.
- 5 To every member of this house
Thy grace impart, thy love extend;
Grant every good that time allows,
With heav'nly joys that never end.
-

HYMN XXXII.

For a Birth Day.

- 1 God of my life! to thee
My cheerful soul I raise;
Thy goodness bade me be,
And still prolongs my days;
I see my natal hour return,
And bless the day that I was born.
- 2 A clod of living earth,
I glorify thy name,
From whom alone my birth,
And all my blessings came;
Creating and preserving grace,
Let all within me shout his praise.
- 3 My soul and all its pow'rs,
Thine, wholly thine shall be,

All, all my happy hours
I consecrate to thee ;
Whate'er I have, whate'er I am,
Shall magnify my Maker's name:

4 Long as I live beneath,
To thee O let me live,
To thee my every breath
In thanks and blessings give ;
Me to thine image now restore,
And I shall praise thee evermore.

HYMN XXXIII.

On the Loss of Friends.

- 1 THE God of love will sure indulge
The flowing tear and heaving sigh ;
When righteous persons fall around,
When tender friends and kindred die.
- 2 Yet not one anxious murmur'ing thought,
Should with our mourning passions blend ;
Nor would our bleeding hearts forget
The' Almighty, ever-loving friend.
- 3 Beneath a numerous train of ills,
Our feeble flesh and hearts may fail ;
Yet shall our hope in thee our God,
O'er every gloomy fear prevail.

- 4 Parent and Husband, Guard and Guide,
Thou art each tender name in one;
On thee we cast our every care,
And comfort seek from thee alone.
- 5 Our Father God, to thee we look,
Our rock, our portion, and our friend;
And on thy cov'nant love and truth,
Our sinking souls shall still depend.
-

HYMN XXXIV.

Funeral Hymn.

- 1 ETERNAL God, how frail is man!
Few are the hours, and short the span,
Between the cradle and the grave:
Who can prolong his vital breath?
Who from the bold demand of death
Hath skill to flee, or power to save?
- 2 But let no murm'ring heart complain,
That therefore man is made in vain,
Nor his Creator's grace distrust;
For though his servants day by day,
Go to their grave and turn to clay,
A bright reward awaits the just.
- 3 Jesus has made thy purpose known,
A new and better life has shown,
And we the joyful tidings hear.

For ever blessed be the Lord,
That we can read his holy word,
And find a resurrection there.

- 4 That grace for ever, Lord, we praise,
Which to thy servant's hope displays,
Of endless life without a pain.
Let all below and all above,
Join to proclaim the wond'rous love,
Which makes e'en death itself our gain.
-

HYMN XXXV.

Funeral Hymn.

- 1 Happy soul thy days are ended,
All thy mourning days below :
Go, by angel guards attended,
To the sight of Jesus go !
Waiting to receive thy spirit,
Lo ! the Saviour stands above.
Shows the purchase of his merit,
Reaches out the crown of love.
- 2 Struggle through the latest passion,
To thy dear Redcemer's breast,
To his uttermost salvation,
To his everlasting rest :
For the joy he sets before thee,
Bear a momentary pain,
Die, to live the life of glory,
Suffer, with thy Lord to reign.

HYMN XXXVI.

Praises for a New Year.

- 1 O God ! our guide, protector, father, friend !
With heart-felt gratitude we bow the knee ;
Accept the thanks which from our hearts ascend,
The humble praises due alone to thee !
- 2 What, though of trials we have had a share ?
What, though oppress'd with grief we oft have
been ?
Thou never hast refused to hear our prayer,
Nor left us to ourselves, the world, or sin.
- 3 And though we boast no blood of earth's descent,
Nor yet of gold's accumulated store ;
Yet these privations we will ne'er lament,
But gratefully acknowledge we have more.
- 4 Yes ! we have more—since Jesus died to save ;
Since He, for us, forsook His seat of bliss ;
No more than this our heav'n-born spirits crave,
And we are happy while assur'd of this.
- 5 If long or short our lives on earth shall be,
If sweet or bitter our appointed cup ;
Lord, we would rest with confidence on thee,
And with a Christian firmness drink it up.

- 6 'Twas thus for us our blest Redeemer did,
Nor would we shrink at trial's dread approach ;
But do whate'er his holy word has bid,
And smile at man's unmerited reproach.
-

HYMN XXXVII.

For New Year's Day.

- 1 EBENEZER, stone of praise !
Have we only one to raise ?
If we count our helps before,
We may raise a thousand more,
- 2 Ebenezer so immense,
Fill'd with acts of providence,
Providence which we survey,
From our cradle to this day.
- 3 Ebenezer, stone of grace !
Broad the surface, deep the base !
'Tis by grace, and grace alone,
Souls are sav'd and God is known.
- 4 Ebenezer, stone of peace !
What an Ebenezer this !
'Tis a top-stone to the rest,
Ever blessing, we are blest.

- 5 Ebenezer let us rear,
For the mercies of this year,
Nor with doubt be we perplex'd;
For the mercies of the next.
-

HYMN XXXVIII.

The Table of Christ.

- 1 OH, what a lovely sight to see,
The saints sit round the sacred board;
Nothing beside so grand can be,
Earth cannot such a scene afford.
- 2 What if the dainties of the east,
In grandeur here were richly spread;
How mean, compar'd with such a feast,
With living wine and living bread.
- 3 Here are provisions rich indeed,
Worthy the Son of God to give;
Just such as all believers need,
Because by them believers live.
- 4 Here, we the chosen of our God,
Can feed on Jesu's dying love;
Here feed upon his precious blood,
Anticipating heaven above.

- 5 If such be our enjoyments here,
While in the flesh, what must they be,
When we around the throne appear,
And face to face our Saviour see!
-

HYMN XXXIX.

Contentment with Providence.

- 1 FATHER, whate'er of earthly bliss,
Thy sovereign will denies;
Accepted at thy throne of grace,
Let this petition rise.
- 2 Give me a calm, a thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessings of thy grace impart,
And make me live to thee.
- 3 Let the sweet hope that thou art mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey smile,
And crown my journey's end.
-

HYMN XL

Saturday Night.

- 1 ANOTHER six days work is done,
Another sabbath is begun ;
Return my soul, enjoy the rest,
Improve the day that God has bless'd.
 - 2 Come, bless the Lord, whose love assigns,
So sweet a rest to weary minds ;
Provides an antipast of heav'n,
And gives this day the food of seven.
 - 3 O that our thoughts and thanks may rise,
As grateful incense to the skies ;
And draw from heav'n that sweet repose,
Which none but he that feels it knows.
 - 4 This heav'nly calm within the breast,
Is the dear pledge of glorious rest ;
Which for the church of God remains,
The end of cares, the end of pains.
 - 5 In holy duties let the day,
In holy pleasure pass away ;
How sweet a sabbath thus to spend,
In hope of one that ne'er shall end.
-

HYMN XLI.

The dying Saint.

- 1 THE hour of my departure's come,
I hear the voice that calls me home;
At last, O Lord ! let troubles cease,
And let thy servant die in peace.
- 2 The race appointed I have run,
The combat's fought, the prize is won;
And now my witness is on high,
And now my record 's in the sky.
- 3 Not in mine innocence I trust,
I bow before thee in the dust;
And through my Saviour's blood alone,
I look for mercy at thy throne.
- 4 I leave the world without a tear,
Save for the friends I hold so dear;
To heal their sorrow, Lord, descend,
And to the friendless prove a friend.
- 5 I come, I come, at thy command,
I give my spirit to thy hand;
Stretch forth thy everlasting arms,
And shield me in the last alarms.
- 6 The hour of my departure's come,
I hear the voice that calls me home;
Now, O my God, let trouble cease,
Now let thy servant die in peace.

HYMN XLII.

Monday Morning.

- 1 And now my soul the sabbath's past,
Let it not be forgot ;
Here duties and employments change,
But Jesus changes not.
 - 2 To labour I am now return'd,
My daily bread to earn ;
But may I ever keep in mind,
What on God's day I learn.
 - 3 And may thy blessing, gracious God,
Attend me through the week ;
Prosper the labour of my hands,
While I thy glory seek.
 - 4 Thus may thy favour crown my days,
And when my end draws near ;
May I be ready to depart,
And at thy bar appear.
 - 5 Then cloth'd in Jesu's righteousness,
May I before thee stand ;
And share the pleasures that are found,
O Lord, at thy right hand.
-

HYMN XLIII.

At Friend's Meeting.

- 1 OH bless'd society
Of saints in friendship join'd ;
From envy, wrath, and malice free,
In words and actions kind.
 - 2 No strife, but to excel,
No hatred, but of sin ;
A perfect harmony without,
Substantial peace within.
 - 3 Each others joy they feel
Each others griefs they share ;
Unite in melody of praise,
And all the force of prayer.
 - 4 Thus in the world above,
Myriads surround the throne,
Hear how they sing, see how they love ;
For all their hearts are one.
-

HYMN XLIV.

- 1 OH what a pleasing sight,
A little heav'n begun,
When saints in closest friendship join'd,
Though many, are but one.

- 2 No slander on their tongues,
The truth in love they tell,
Each others joys and sorrows share,
In sweetest union dwell.
- 3 Into the festering wound,
The healing balm they pour ;
Jesus the Lord hath done
Much more than this before.
- 4 His bright example they
Still keep within their view ;
Thus he on earth was wont to feel,
And thus was wont to do.
-

HYMN XLV.

Social Prayer.

- 1 LORD, look on all assembled here,
Our cottage-meeting bless,
May praises from the heart ascend,
And prayer obtain success.
- 2 We ask the pardon of our guilt,
We want to love thee more ;
We pray to make us conqueror's too,
O'er sin and Satan's power.

3 Be thou our help while here below,
For help we greatly need,
And bring us to thy courts above,
Where saints are bless'd indeed.

4 May we and those we love on earth,
Be all from sin set free,
And when we meet in heav'n above,
We'll give the praise to thee.

HYMN XLVI

A Parting Hymn.

1 LET us once more before we part,
Unite to sing the Saviour's name,
His praise should dwell on ev'ry heart,
And ev'ry voice should sound his fame.

2 In him we live, in him we move,
In him we have our being too;
T'was he who left his throne above
To save our souls from sin and woe.

3 Through him we hope to meet on high,
And celebrate his praises there,
Join the Hosannas of the sky,
And his eternal love declare.

HYMN XLVII.

Birth Day Hymn.

- 1 IMMORTAL praises be to thee,
Thou God, of grace, and majesty !
O may my lips unfeigned sing,
The goodness of my heavenly king !
 - 2 My guide through life, thou Lord hast been,
Thy gracious helping hand I've seen ;
Still seeking thee may I be found,
Remote from all forbidden ground !
 - 3 Sway in my heart thy sceptre, Lord,
Make me obedient to thy word,
Make me delight t' obey thy will,
And all thy pleasure to fulfil.
 - 4 Be this my constant theme to tell,
That thou canst save from death and hell ;
And may I reckon all things lost,
But Jesu's Gospel and his cross.
-

HYMN XLVIII.

Wedding Hymn.

- 1 OUR Jesus freely did appear
To grace a marriage feast ;
And, Lord, we ask thy presence here,
To make a wedding guest.
- 2 Upon the bridal pair look down,
Who now have plighted hands ;
Their union with thy favour crown,
And bless the mutual bands.
- 3 With gifts and grace their hearts endow
Of all rich dowries best !
Their substance bless and peace bestow,
To sweeten all the rest.
- 4 In purest love their souls unite,
And link'd in every care,
To render fam'ly burdens light,
By taking mutual share.
- 5 True helpers may they prove indeed,
In prayer, and faith, and hope ;
And see with joy a godly seed,
To build the household up.
- 6 As Isaac and Rebecca give
A pattern chaste and kind ;
So may this new-met couple live,
In faithful friendship join'd.

HYMN XLIX.

A wish for Domestic Piety.

- 1 IN all my ways, Oh God,
I would acknowledge thee ;
And seek to keep my heart and house
From all pollution free.
 - 2 Where'er I have a tent,
An altar will I raise ;
And thither my oblations bring,
Of humble pray'r and praise.
 - 3 Could I my wish obtain,
My household, Lord, should be,
Devoted to thyself alone,
A nursery for thee.
-

HYMN L.

Saturday Evening.

- 1 THE Lord has brought us safely through
The trials of another week,
And if to-morrow's dawn we view,
Within his courts his grace we'll seek.

- 2 We'll render praises to thy name,
For an appointed day of rest ;
O may we, Lord, improve the same,
And be with thy dear presence blest.
- 3 Week after week still rolling on,
Leaves but few sabbaths yet to spend :
But when our week of life is gone,
Our heavenly sabbath ne'er shall end.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

FORMS OF PRAYER
SUITED TO
FAMILY WORSHIP.

MORNING AND EVENING.

PART THE THIRD.

THE FIRST WEEK.

*A Prayer for the Lord's Day Morning.**

ADORATION.

GLORIOUS Jehovah, Lord of heaven and earth !
We desire to bow before thy throne, and with deep
humility, and holy reverence, to prostrate ourselves
at thy feet. Thou art worthy of universal and
everlasting adoration and praise. The heavens are
filled with thy glory, and the earth with thy good-
ness—great and marvellous are thy works, Lord
God Almighty !

* Those short spaces marked — are intended to intimate
the proper places for enlargement : those parts enclosed by
parenthesis () may, if the prayer be too long, be left out.

But thy noblest works are infinitely below thyself. O God, thou art very great ! The glory of thy majesty transcends the most enlarged capacity of thy creatures. Our souls are lost in the contemplation of thee ! who can declare thy greatness, or sufficiently tell of thy mighty acts ?

And what are we, that we should come into thy awful presence, or presume to speak unto the most high ?

CONFESSION.

We are both unworthy and unfit to hold communion with thee. But thy goodness invites, and our wants compel us to come to thy mercy seat. And, blessed for ever be thy holy name, thou hast graciously appointed thy well beloved Son to be the mediator between thee and us, and promised to give thy good Spirit to help our infirmities. We owe it entirely to thy sparing mercy that our lives are still continued unto us. Justly mightest thou, O God, have poured out thy fury upon us, when we called not upon thy name, and lived as those that knew thee not.—We are ashamed when we reflect upon our former neglect of thee our Creator and Benefactor ?

PETITION.

O look upon us now in thy great mercy, through thy dear Son, on whose atonement and righteousness we would rely, as the sole ground of our hope

and confidence towards thee. For his sake forgive all our sins, and blot out all our transgressions. Let them be washed away from our souls, that we may know that we have redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace. O thou God of hope, fill our souls with joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope through the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. May the glory of thy grace, as revealed in the Gospel, encourage our confidence in thee; and may every cloud be dispersed by the Sun of Righteousness rising upon us, with healing under his wings.

Lord, help us in all our attempts to approach unto thee this day. May the Holy Spirit help our infirmities, that our faith, and hope, and love, may be drawn forth into the most lively exercises, and that we may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Let us be in the spirit on the Lord's day, that a risen Redeemer may be glorified in us, and by us. O that his blood may be infinitely precious in our estimation; that being justified thereby, we may enjoy peace with God, and a lively hope through his resurrection from the dead.

Lord, we desire to bless thee for the institution of the Sabbath. This day thou hast made, that thy people may rejoice and be glad therein. Thou hast promised to bless the provision of thy house, and to satisfy thy poor with bread. Thou hast said, In all places wherein I record my name, I will come and bless thee. We have found thee to be faithful to thy word. We have seen thy power and

thy glory in the sanctuary. We therefore thank thee for the return of these opportunities. Send us help this day from thy sanctuary, and strengthen us out of Zion.

INTERCESSION.

O, let the voice of rejoicing be every where in the tabernacles of the righteous. May thy people feel the power of thy grace and love in Christ Jesus, that their souls may bless thee, and their lips praise thee.

Go with us, we pray thee, to thine house, and let thy special presence be enjoyed by us there.— Assist thy ministering servants; make them mighty, through thy power attending their labours, to the pulling down of every strong hold of pride, prejudice, and the love of sin, and every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of Christ. We pray thee to build up thy people in their most holy faith. May they be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

Especially we request of thee to be with thy servant whom we expect to hear this day. Do thou endue him with that wisdom which none shall be able to gainsay or resist. O refresh his own soul; enlarge and warm his heart; bless him and make him a blessing. Help us to listen to his instructions with seriousness, and to receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save our souls, through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord.—And now Lord, what wait we for, our hope is in thee.

THANKSGIVING.

Accept our thanks for thy past mercies, and graciously continue unto us, and ours, every comfort, grace, and blessing, for the alone sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, our only and glorious Saviour and Redeemer, who hath taught us when we pray to say,

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Lord's Day Evening.

O THOU high and holy Lord God, who in habitest eternity, and dwellest in the high and holy place; with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit, and that trembleth at thy word. Thou art great, and to be had in reverence by all them that are round about thee. Thou art also good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee. We thy unworthy servants desire this evening to review as in thy presence, the day past, humbling ourselves for our sinfulness, and thanking thee for thy loving kindness with which

we have been favoured. We have been permitted to tread thy courts, to sing thy praise, and to hearken to the voice of thy word. Lord, we have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. We have seen thy goings in thy sanctuary, and are again united to call upon thee. We are not worthy of the least of thy favours, nor of thy truth which thou hast showed us. We acknowledge the many and great imperfections of our best services. That our very worship is defective and defiled; and, that instead of atoning for our past sins, or recommending us to thy favour, they need thy gracious forgiveness; and must be washed in the blood of Christ.

Pardon, therefore, we beseech thee this evening, whatever thy holy eyes have seen amiss in the duties of the day: the wanderings of our hearts, the coldness of our affections, our want of reverence, love, and gratitude; the weakness of our faith, the wavering of our hope, the mixture of self-seeking and regard to men, with which our religious services have been contaminated. We humbly implore thy fatherly and gracious forgiveness of every thought, word, and action, by which we have grieved thy Holy Spirit, dishonoured thy name, or counteracted the gracious design of this thy holy day. Wash us thoroughly from our sins, in the fountain of atoning blood, that we may have comfort in thy pardoning love, even the enjoyment of peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We desire to be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves. We would both

glorify thee, and hold communion with thee, in thy holy ordinances and worship. O let a double portion of thy Spirit rest upon us. Deepen thy work in our souls, and make us such as thou wouldest have us to be. Set up thy throne in our hearts, and write thy law there. Let thy word be fastened upon our minds, and fixed in our memories, as a nail in a sure place. Sanctify and seal us thine in body, soul, and spirit. O let thy grace, which is sufficient for us, be mighty in us, that we may be enabled to hold on our way, and wax stronger and stronger—That so an abundant entrance may be ministered to us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We humbly pray thee to bless thy church throughout the world. Let thy people be increased both in number and grace. May peace be within her walls, and prosperity within her palaces. Let thy glory be seen in the midst of Zion, and upon all the glory let there be a defence. Yea, let the mountain of the Lord's house be established upon the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and let all nations flow unto it. Hasten, O Lord, the downfall of Popish delusion, and heathenish idolatry; and may every plant that is not of thy right hand planting be rooted out of the earth.—Bless the labours of missionaries wherever in thy good providence they are sent. Through their instrumentality may many be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Have mercy upon thine ancient people the Jews. Thou hast scattered them in thine anger, O gather

them in thy great mercy. Let the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in, and let all Israel be saved.

Now, Lord, take us again into thy keeping ; give us refreshing sleep, and fit us for the duties of the ensuing day if we are spared to see it. We pray not that thou shouldst take us out of the world, but that thou wouldst keep us from the evil. May we act as under thine eye, and as becomes thy redeemed people ; and be habitually prepared for death and judgment. These and all mercies, we, unworthy sinners, humbly solicit from thy bounteous hand, for the sake, and through the merits and mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, to whom, with thee O Father, and the Holy Spirit, we would ascribe equal and endless adoration and praise. *Amen.*

A shorter prayer for the Lord's Day Morning.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth, who faintest not, neither art weary. We bless and thank thee, that thou has protected us through another night, refreshed our frail bodies, and brought us in safety to another day of sacred rest. Lord, help us, we beseech thee, to welcome every return of it ; and to call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable. May this day, which thou hast blessed, be a Sabbath of rest to our souls, as well as to our bodies. Grant that we may find it good to draw near to thee, both in private and public. Let thy word preached pro-

fit us, being mixed with faith in us, who hear it. We desire with seriousness to listen to the instructions of thy servants, that we may be more thoroughly convinced of the evil of sin, more deeply affected with the wonders of thy redeeming love; more clearly informed in the knowledge of thy holy will, and more powerfully animated to the performance of it. We desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. O God, we would humbly present ourselves before thee to hear all things that thou dost command us. Teach us the way of thy statutes, and by thy grace we will keep it unto the end: we will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge our hearts.

Inspire our souls with sentiments of unfeigned gratitude for all the comforts of the past week.—Especially give us a thankful remembrance of the death of Christ, and of his glorious resurrection from the dead. May we enjoy redemption in his blood, be raised to a life of righteousness, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. O raise our thoughts and affections to things above; and quicken our desires after our heavenly inheritance. May thy good Spirit teach us to profit, and enable us unto a right performance of every service in which we may be engaged. May he be our sanctifier, comforter, and guide. Let him take of the things of Christ and show them unto us, leading us into all truth, the truth as it is in Jesus. And we pray also that thy love may be shed abroad in the hearts of all thy people by the Holy Spirit given unto them. May all our religious services be performed under the

influence of that blessed principle, and so be pleasing unto thee, and profitable unto ourselves. Let thy presence be with all christian congregations this day. Enlighten the blind eyes, unstop the deaf ears, heal the diseased, and turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. Bless all ranks and degrees of men, and particularly our friends and relations. Prepare them for thy service here, and for thy glory hereafter. Hear and answer us according to the multitude of thy mercies for Jesus Christ's sake, to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit, be all glory and praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A shorter Prayer for the Lord's Day Evening.

O THOU that makest the outgoings of the morning and evening rejoice! Thou giver of every good gift, and source of all consolation! Accept we beseech thee, our unfeigned thanks for the continuance of our lives, and of all thy mercies. For the protection and provision thou hast hitherto afforded us, and all the general and special benefits we enjoy. We would consider them, as coming from thine hand, and as the fruit of thy unmerited kindness to us thy sinful creatures. But above all, we are bound always to give thanks to thee, because thou hast from the beginning chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto thou hast called us by the Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus

Christ. We bless thee, O thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou hast redeemed our souls by his most precious blood, and begotten us again to a lively hope by his resurrection from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. We thank thee for thy written word, and a preached Gospel; and all the abundant spiritual privileges with which we are favoured. What shall we render to the Lord for all his benefits!—O help us, we pray thee, not only to offer at thy mercy seat our feeble sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, but to present ourselves also as living sacrifices, devoted to thy service and glory. May we be enabled to deny all ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly and godly in the present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. To this end, let us be crucified with Christ, that we may not live, but that Christ live in us, and the life we live in the flesh, may be by the faith of the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us.—Follow with thy blessing the services of this day. Seal instruction on our hearts, that we may not be forgetful hearers, but that the word being mixed with faith, may be of lasting benefit to us. Graciously regard us as a family, and bless us in him, in whom all the believing families of the earth are blessed.

Remember in thy mercy all our dear friends and

relations, and grant them every needful blessing ; especially remember them with the favour thou bearest toward thy chosen, and visit them with thy salvation. Let them become savingly acquainted with thee, that thereby they may be at peace, and good may come unto them. Prosper, we beseech thee, the labours of those, who have any where this day preached thy word in simplicity and godly sincerity. May thy people be edified in their most holy faith, and sinners be converted unto thee. Hear the supplications which have this day been presented to thee by thine assembled people.—May thy cause every where prevail, and thy word have free course, run, and be glorified. Pour out thy Spirit from on high upon the nations, that mountains may flow down at thy presence, and every difficulty be effectually removed. May every yoke be destroyed, and all the captives of error and superstition be released ; and the gospel of liberty, love, and peace fill the whole earth. And now, O heavenly Father, we commend ourselves to thy keeping this night. Watch over us and our habitation. Preserve us in body and mind ; refresh us with comfortable and quiet sleep, and fit us for the work and duties of another day. May all our days and weeks be thus begun, continued, and ended with thee ; and grant that we who now unite in prayer on earth, may meet before thy throne in heaven to sing thy praise, and triumph in thy love, through the righteousness, atonement, and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ ; for whom we bless Thee, and to whom with thyself, and the

eternal Spirit, we will ascribe all glory and praise, thanksgiving and blessing, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Monday Morning.

O LORD God of Israel; there is none like unto thee in the heavens above, nor in the earth beneath: glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders! thou art clothed with honour and majesty; and coverest thyself with light as with a garment. Thy perfections are infinite, and thy goodness is inexhaustible and everlasting. Worthy art thou to receive universal adoration and grateful praise from thy intelligent creatures. Thou art our God, and we will praise thee, our Father's God, and we will exalt thee. We are thine, and are bound by infinite obligations to love, serve, and glorify thee.

CONFESSION.

But we have not rendered unto thee according to the benefits done unto us. We have been unmindful of the rock of our salvation. We have followed lying vanities, and forsaken our own mercies. O God, thou knowest our foolishness, and our sins are not hid from thee.

PETITION.

Pardon, we beseech thee, the wanderings of our hearts, the coldness of our affections, our want of

reverence, love, and gratitude. Thou art good and ready to forgive ; and now, we pray thee forgive our iniquities, according to the greatness of thy mercy, as thou hast forgiven even until now. A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary ; even the throne of thy grace, to which we are invited and encouraged to come, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.—Although we deserve to lose thy favour and gracious presence, yet grant us the joy of thy salvation, and uphold us with thy free Spirit. O let thy providence be our defence and security, and thy Holy Spirit our comforter, and guide, and counsellor in all our ways. Sanctify our memories to retain the heavenly truths we have read and heard on the past day. May we bring much of the Sabbath into the week. Keep us from evil, that it may not grieve us. Let thine eye be ever upon us for good. Help us to leave ourselves entirely to thy care. Suffer us not to be tempted above what we are able to bear ; but with every temptation make a way for our escape. Hold up our goings in thy path, that our feet slip not. Set a watch before our mouths, and keep the door of our lips, that we offend not with our tongues. May we always speak that which is good to the use of edifying, that we may minister grace to the hearers. Lord increase our faith, enliven, encourage, and establish our hope, and cause our charity towards each other to abound. Teach us to be of one mind, and to live in peace, that the God of love and peace may be with us. O help us to put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved,

bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness, long suffering, forgiving one another, as thou for Christ's sake hast forgiven us. Under all our trials and crosses, which thou art any time pleased to lay upon us, give us patience and resignation to thy will. Help us ever to say, the will of the Lord be done. Let patience have her perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing; yea, may we be enabled unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness. O thou God of hope, fill us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit given unto us.

INTERCESSION.

We pray for all our relations and friends. Give them prosperity both of soul and body. Bless them with all things that pertain to life and godliness, and may grace and peace be multiplied unto us through the righteousness of God our Saviour Jesus Christ. In him may they be justified, sanctified, and saved with an everlasting salvation. Bless thy church; do good in thy pleasure unto Zion. Grant peace within her walls, and prosperity within her palaces; may many be added to thy people daily, such as shall be eternally saved. Have compassion upon the sons and daughters of affliction; visit them in thy mercy, and help them to glorify thee in the fires. Sanctify their sufferings to them, that they may come forth as purified gold; acknowledging that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faith-

fulness hast afflicted them. Teach them the vanity of the world, and the uncertainty of the present life. Make them wise to consider their latter end, and to know the things that make for their eternal peace, before they are for ever hid from their eyes.

THANKSGIVING.

We bless thee for thy sparing mercy and long-suffering towards us. Hitherto thou hast helped us. Thanks be to thee for food and raiment, for health and friends, and all the comforts of this life. Especially we praise thee for thy Sabbaths, and the ordinances of thy house; for thy word, which is a light unto our feet, and a lantern to our paths. Above all thy other mercies, we would gratefully acknowledge the unspeakable gift of thy dear Son. Herein is love! Not that we loved thee, but that thou hast loved us, and sent thy Son to be the propitiation for our sins. O how great is thy goodness in thus regarding such sinful creatures as we are! Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou shouldest visit him? Make us ashamed of our cold unfeeling hearts, which have so little love to thee, notwithstanding all that thou hast done, and art continually doing for us. Stir up we pray thee our gratitude and love, that out of the fulness of our hearts, our tongues may speak thy praise, and be telling of thy salvation from day to day. We ask all in Christ's name, and for his sake alone.

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible;

the only wise God, be honour, and glory, dominion and praise, henceforth and for ever. *Amen.*

Monday Evening.

O Most blessed and glorious God, the great possessor of heaven and earth, whose we are, and whom we are bound by innumerable obligations to love and serve. Thou hast made us, and not we ourselves. We are also the monuments of thy mercy, and have been all our days the objects of thy munificence and care. When we reflect upon the glory of thy majesty, we are astonished that thou shouldst condescend to take any favourable notice of creatures so mean and so vile as we are. It is an unspeakable privilege that we have liberty of access unto thee through Jesus Christ, and to call thee our Father in Him.

PETITION.

O look upon us now, and be merciful to us as thou usest to do to those that love and fear thy name. May we account our daily worship of thee, the most needful of our daily business, and the most pleasant of our daily comforts. It is a good thing to give thanks to thy name, O Lord, and to show forth thy praise, O thou most High. Morning and evening to speak of thy faithfulness, and talk of thy wonderful works. O raise our hearts to thyself; inspire

our meditations ; and accept us in thy beloved Son. Send down thy Holy Spirit upon us. May he dwell in our hearts continually, as a spirit of faith and love, of power, and of a sound mind. O that we may ever bear in mind the inexpressible sufferings of our divine Saviour, when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree. May his love constrain us to live henceforth not to ourselves, but to Him that died for us and rose again. Teach us effectually to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and let not any iniquity have dominion over us. Grant that the flesh may be crucified with its affections and lusts ; and that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we may not serve sin. Lord, leave us not to ourselves, lest we fall. Guide us, or we shall go astray. Uphold our goings in thy ways, that our footsteps slip not.

INTERCESSION.

O Lord God of Israel, we beseech thee to bless and keep all thy people. With favour do thou compass them as with a shield. O continue thy loving-kindness to them that know thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

Be gracious to our relations and friends, according to their several circumstances and wants. Comfort and relieve the afflicted ; succour the tempted and oppressed, and give joy to those that mourn in Zion. Graciously regard the land of our nativity, and continue to us the means of grace, and all the liberties and privileges we enjoy. Send out thy light and

truth to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and guide their feet into the way of peace. Let thy ways be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Be gracious to our sovereign the King. Protect his person and life, preserve his health, and prolong his days. Give thy judgments to the King, and thy righteousness to the King's son. Direct our counsellors and teach our senators wisdom. Make them faithful to the interests of the nation, and dispose them to employ their influence for the public good.

THANKSGIVING.

We give thee thanks for all thy favours vouchsafed to mankind in general, and to ourselves in particular. Lead us to thyself by thy mercies as with cords of love; and direct us unto all things that are well pleasing in thy sight, through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Tuesday Morning.

ADORATION.

Most glorious and ever blessed God! We desire to bow before thy Majesty, and to pay thee our homage. We adore thee as the first and the last, the greatest and the best of beings. Thou art the author and support of universal nature, the Lord and life of the creation. We acknowledge ourselves

to be thy creatures, whose bodies and souls have been formed by thy hand, and continually maintained and defended by thy munificence and care. Most justly, therefore, O our heavenly Father, dost thou require from us gratitude, love, and obedience.

CONFESSIO.

But we humbly confess before thee, that we have been much wanting in those returns. To thee belong mercies and forgivenesses, but to us, shame and confusion of face, because we have sinned against thee, our preserver and benefactor. We confess, O holy Lord God, that we are polluted and sinful creatures, and unfit, as well as unworthy to appear in thy presence. Hadst thou dealt with us according to our deserts, we should long since have been cut off from every enjoyment, and driven from thy presence, to seek in vain a refuge from thy frown and terrible displeasure. Thou mightest have made us examples of thy awful justice, and spectacles of misery to thy rational creation. Against each of us would the guilty charge have for ever stood,—“The God in whose hand thy life is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.” But blessed be thy name, that though we have sinned and come short of thy glory, there is mercy with thee that thou mayest be feared. And notwithstanding our great unworthiness, thou hast encouraged us to come to thy throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

PETITION.

Through the mediation of thy Son, we come to thee, and humbly implore thy mercy and grace in him, who, we hope, died for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Through his atoning blood is preached unto us the forgiveness of sins; and we rejoice that he is able to save unto the very uttermost, all them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. We entreat thee for his sake to forgive us all our numberless transgressions, and to be gracious to us in the Son of thy love. O give us a comfortable sense of our acceptance into thy favour. Lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and shed abroad thy love in our hearts: for in thy favour, O Lord, is our life, and the happiness of our souls. With that, we cannot be miserable in the worst condition here; and without it, we cannot be happy in the best. Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth to be desired besides thee. We pray that the love of the world and the power of sin may be destroyed in us. Grant us a constant supply of the spirit of Jesus, as a spirit of purity and love, of power, and of a sound mind. Give us more of the spirit of adoption; and help us to walk in love as dear children. Show us more of thy infinite goodness, and of thy wonderful love and grace in Christ Jesus. Thou art rich in mercy for the great love wherewith thou hast loved thy people, and hast quickened them with him, and

hast raised them up, and made them to sit in heavenly places in him. O that we, being risen with Christ, may seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Assured from thy blessed word, and by our own experience of thy grace, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory, may we deny ourselves daily, and take up our cross and follow him: living soberly and piously in the present evil world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearance of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ.

INTERCESSION.

Shower down, O Lord, thy blessing upon the inhabitants of the world. Have respect to thy covenant, for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. Send thy word and heal the nations; give light to them that sit in darkness and in the region of the shadow of death. O hasten the downfall of Satan's empire, and let the kingdom of Christ be erected upon the ruins thereof. Have mercy upon Jews, Turks, and infidels, and enlighten them with the true knowledge of thy word: let the earth be full of thy glory, let the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in, and let all Israel be saved. Be very gracious to the ministers of thy holy word; make them faithful, and give them abundant success; clothe them with salvation, that thy saints may shout aloud for joy. Be with thy servant especially under whose ministry we are

placed. Enable him to speak things that become sound doctrine; help us to profit by his endeavours, and grant that we may be his joy and crown in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming. May thy blessing rest upon this family, and thy light shine upon our tabernacle. Bless all our relations, friends, and acquaintances with all good things, and especially with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Graciously pity the afflicted, succour the tempted, provide for the poor, and be a present help to all in the time of trouble.

THANKSGIVING.

Accept, O Lord, our acknowledgments for the mercies of the past night, for the comfortable repose we have had, and that we are favoured with the light of another day. We bless thee that no evil has befallen us, nor any plague come nigh our dwelling. For these and all thy mercies make us unfeignedly thankful. May our lives as well as our lips, be vocal, and speak thy praise: Hear, accept, and bless us for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Tuesday Evening.

BLESSED and holy Lord God! who didst make all things by thy power, who rulest all things by thy providence, and fillest all places with thy presence. We, thine unworthy creatures, beseech

thee to fill our hearts with a reverential awe of thy majesty, and a lively hope and confidence in thy mercy, in our approaches unto thee. We would humbly and thankfully acknowledge our absolute and entire dependence upon thee; that for our lives and all the comforts of them, we are wholly indebted to thy bounty. Thou art good, and thou doest good; heaven and earth are full of thy goodness. Surely goodness and mercy have followed us to this day. By thy good hand upon us, our lives are preserved and freed from sad accidents and calamitous events. Thou hast guided our goings out, and our comings in, and crowned us with thy tender mercies. Thy unwearied munificence hath spread our table, and supplied our needs; and we trust thou hast been at our right hand, so that we have not been greatly moved.

May we be induced by the mercies of the Lord, to present our bodies and souls living sacrifices, holy and acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ, which is our most reasonable service. What reason have we to lament, that we have been so little affected and influenced by a sense of thy goodness towards us! Pardon, we pray thee, our past ingratitude, our insensibility, and the coldness of our love towards thee, our gracious guardian and benefactor. O wash us from all our sins, and encourage our confidence in thy love and grace in Christ Jesus. From a filial and grateful love to thee, may we be constantly excited to a fear of offending, and an ardent desire to please and glorify thee. Help us to deny all ungodliness, yea, to

deny ourselves, and take up our cross daily, and follow Jesus through both evil and good report. Grant that the mind which was in Him may be in us, and that we may be enabled to walk as he also walked. Give us, we beseech thee, true humility, and a feeling sense of our many imperfections. Render us more spiritually minded, by the constant indwelling of thy Holy Spirit in our hearts. Fix our affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. Lord, keep us ever in mind that the time is short, and that the fashion of this world passeth away. May this conviction engage us to be zealous for God, and diligent to make our calling and election sure; to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. Give us grace also to be contented with the station and circumstances allotted to us by thy all-wise providence in the present world. Yea, under all the afflictions of life may we be enabled to say with cheerful submission, the will of the Lord be done. Call forth in our hearts a kind and merciful disposition towards our fellow-men. In all our dealings with them may we display the gentleness of Christ, and manifest simplicity and godly sincerity. May moderation ever mark our lawful pursuits and enjoyments; using the things of this world as the gifts of thy bounty, may we never dare to abuse them. Lord, bless each member of this family in Him in whom all the believing families of the earth are blessed. O bless us, and we shall be blessed indeed. It is thy blessing that maketh rich, and

addeth no sorrow therewith. A little that the righteous hath, is, we believe, better than great riches to the ungodly. Lord we do not ask, nor would we seek great things for ourselves. Give us neither poverty nor riches, but feed us with food convenient for us. And having food and raiment, enable us therewith to be content. O that our ways may be directed to keep thy testimonies, and that we may so behave in our several relations in life, as to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

(Bless our children; make them thine, and let us have the joy of seeing them walking in the faith and truth of the Gospel.)

Graciously regard the servants. Give them grace to serve not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.—May they derive real advantage from the privileges they enjoy; and may they never rise in judgment against them. Have compassion on the sick and afflicted—Succour the tempted, and save them in the trying hour. Bring their souls out of prison; that they may praise thy name.

And now, O gracious Father, we commend ourselves and each other to thy special protection this night. Grant that whether we live or die, we may be thine for ever. Hear and answer these our humble requests for Jesus Christ's sake. The grace of our Lord, &c.

Wednesday Morning.

By the Rev. Dr. Watts.

PROFESSION.

O LORD our God, unto thee would we lift up our souls. Quicken us to call upon thy name. Assist us by thy Spirit in our access to thy mercy-seat, and raise our hearts to thyself. Teach us to approach thee as becometh creatures, and do thou draw near unto us as a God of Grace.

ADORATION.

Thou art God, and there is none else, thy name alone is Jehovah. All nations before thee are as nothing, and they are accounted in thy sight less than nothing and vanity. Thou art the blessed and only potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. All things are naked and open before thine eyes. Thou searchest the heart of man, but how unsearchable is thine understanding! Thy power is infinite. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Thou art slow to anger, abundant in goodness, thy mercy is everlasting, and thy truth endureth to all generations.

As thou art glorious in thyself, so by thy works, thou hast manifested thy glory to us. Thou, Lord, hast made the heavens and the earth; the whole creation is the work of thine hands. Thou rulest among the armies of heaven, and doest what thou

pleasest among the inhabitants of the earth. Thy works of nature and providence are full of wonder; but especially thy works of grace and redemption by Jesus Christ.

CONFESSION.

While we give glory unto thee, we would humble ourselves in thy presence. Our being is but of yesterday, and our foundation is in the dust. We are not only mean in our original, but we are guilty and depraved. We confess before thee the iniquities of our thoughts, of our lips, and of our lives; our sins of omission and commission; the sins of our childhood, and of our riper years; our sins against the Law and against the Gospel.

We mourn before God our pride and vanity of mind; our earthly-mindedness, and love of this world; our sensuality and indulgence of the flesh; our carnal security, and unthankfulness for our many mercies; our fretfulness and impatience, or sinful dejection in times of trouble; our neglects of duty, and want of love to thee; our unbelief and hardness of heart; our slothfulness and decay in religion; the dishonour we have brought to thy name, and all our miscarriages to our fellow-creatures.

We are ashamed and blush to lift up our faces before thee our God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespasses have reached up to the heavens. We will lay our hands upon our mouth, and our mouth in the dust, if so, there may be hope.

We deserve, O Lord, to be for ever cast out of thy presence, and cut off from all hope of thy favor. If thou shouldest mark our iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, and with thee is plenteous redemption. Blessed be thy name that thou hast invited us to the throne of thy grace, and promised, that if we confess and forsake our sins, we shall find mercy.

PETITION.

Gracious God, we humbly beseech thee to take away the guilt of our sins, through the atonement of thy Son; justify our persons through his righteousness, and subdue the power of our iniquities by thy Spirit. Deliver us from the natural darkness of our minds, from the corruption of our hearts, and the perverse tendency of our appetites and passions. May thy Spirit discover to us the evil and danger of sin, enlighten our minds in the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, and sanctify all the powers of our nature. Form our hearts according to thy will, and after the image of thy Son. Be thou our light and our strength, and quicken us in the path of holy obedience. Fortify us against the temptations, and free us from the snares which daily attend us. While we are in this life, we are in continual danger; let the watchful eyes of our God be upon us for our defence. Save us from the power of our enemies in this world, and from the punishment due to our sins in the world to come.

Preserve the Gospel among us, and let all the

means of grace be continued to us, and be made serviceable for the great ends of their appointment. Let thy providences be sanctified to us. May thy mercies, as cords of love, draw us nearer to thyself; and let the strokes of thine afflicting hand wean us from sin, mortify us to the world, and make us ready for our departure hence, whensoever thou art pleased to call us. Guide us by thy counsel, and secure us by thy grace, in all our travels through this dangerous wilderness, and at last give us victory over death, and a triumphant entrance into the kingdom of thy glory.

While we are here in the body, give us such things as are necessary to support our lives, and make them easy and comfortable to us. Let our health, our strength, and our peace be maintained, and let holiness to the Lord be inscribed upon them all, that whatever we receive from thine hands may be improved for thine honour and our truest advantage.

INTERCESSION.

We pray thee to enlarge the borders of thy Son's kingdom. Spread the Gospel among the heathen, and make the name of Christ glorious from the rising to the setting sun. Call in the remainder of thine ancient people the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentiles, into thy church. Pour down a more abundant measure of thy Spirit to carry on thy own work upon earth. May his influence be diffused in plentiful degrees upon churches, upon ministers,

upon families, and upon all the saints. Deliver those who suffer from persecuting powers: restrain the wrath of man, and cause it to praise thee.

We pray for the nation to which we belong, that liberty and peace may be established and flourish in it. Bless our governors, supreme and subordinate, with wisdom and faithfulness, to manage the affairs thou hast entrusted with them. We pray for our friends and relatives, that thou wouldest deliver them from all the evils they feel or fear; and bestow upon them all the good we wish for ourselves, here, or hereafter.

THANKSGIVING.

We give thee humble and hearty thanks for all thy mercies vouchsafed to mankind in general, and to ourselves in particular; especially for the safety and refreshment of the past night. May the same good providence defend us through the hours of this day, and may thy grace assist us in all the duties of it. Hear and answer us, pardon, accept, and bless us, for thy mercy sake in Jesus Christ, through whom, by one spirit, be ascribed to the only living and true God, everlasting praises. *Amen.*

Wednesday Evening.

By the Rev. Mr. Baxter.

O GOD, the infinite eternal Spirit, most perfect in power, wisdom, and goodness ; though mortal eyes cannot behold, nor any created understanding comprehend thee, thou art ever present with us, and seest the secrets of our hearts : all our sins, and all our wants are known to thee : but thou wisely requirest our confessions, as the exercise of our repentance, and our petitions and thanksgivings, as the expressions of our desires, dependence, and gratitude. We confess our unfitness for such converse with thee. O thou, whose mercy invitest miserable sinners to come unto thee by the new and living way, meet us not in thy justice, as a consuming fire, but accept us in thy righteous and well-beloved Son.

Thou, who art the creator of all things, didst make us in thine image, to know, love, and serve thee. But sin hath corrupted all our powers, and perverted them from the ends for which they were made.

(We ought to have served thee with our whole hearts, and to have employed our time, our thoughts, our tongues, and all our capacities, for thy glory, and the good of men ; but alas, we have often trifled in thy worship, and hypocritically served thee with our lips alone, and have taken thy dreadful name in vain. Our thoughts have been guilty of vanity, folly, and impurity ; our tongues of idle,

wrathful, and injurious words. We have not loved our neighbour as ourselves, nor sought each other's welfare, temporal or spiritual, with that zeal and affection, which our relation to each other, and thy love to us required. We have unprofitably abused thy talents, and done but little good in the world, in comparison with what we might have done.)

And though thy wonderful mercy hath given us a Redeemer, and in him such a remedy for our sins, as is the astonishment of men and angels, we are chargeable with unbelief, and a stupid neglect of this great salvation. How little have we been affected with the love and sufferings of a Saviour, and how have we made light of Christ and his Gospel ! Justly mightest thou deny us the mercy which we have so lightly esteemed.

But deal not with us, O Lord, according to our deserts, but according to our necessity, and thy great goodness. Where our sin hath abounded, let thy grace much more abound. There is enough in the merits of thy Son's obedience and sacrifice, to expiate our guilt, and to justify penitent believers in thy sight. We would therefore encourage ourselves in the Lord our God, and cheerfully rely upon thy pardoning mercy.

And while in the exercise of faith, we earnestly implore the forgiveness of our past sins, we desire cheerfully to return to thee, in the way of our duty, and humbly give up ourselves to thee our God, our Father, our Saviour and our Sanctifier ; beseeching thee to receive us upon the terms of the covenant of grace. Renew and sanctify us by thy

Spirit. Take from us the heart of stone, and give us hearts of flesh. Impart to us a divine and heavenly nature, and transform us into the image of thy holiness. Enable us to devote ourselves, and all that thou givest us, entirely to thee as thine own. Bring all the powers of our souls and bodies into a full subjection to thy government. Shed abroad thy love in our hearts, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Show us more of thine infinite goodness and perfections, and the wonderful mercy which thou hast given us in Christ; and let the beams of thy love so fire our breasts, that we may love thee with all our hearts and souls, with all our mind and strength; and may taste the beginning of the felicity of heaven; where we shall love thee more than we can now desire or conceive.

(Give us more of the spirit of adoption, possess us with all child-like affections towards thee as our reconciled God and Father in Christ. Teach us to make thee our ultimate end, and to seek thy glory in all we do, and let thy exceeding love and mercy to us, engage us to love one another; to love all mankind; and even our enemies themselves. May we ever be ready to pardon the injuries we may receive, and to do good to all to the utmost of our power.)

Keep us, we beseech thee, from every thing in our words and actions by which we should dishonour thy name, and grieve thy Spirit. Quicken and animate us in every duty, whether personal, relative, or divine. And help us to spend this transitory life in a diligent preparation for death and

eternity : let our hearts and our conversation be in heaven. Be with us through the changing scenes of life ; and O, forsake us not in our last extremity, but give us hope in a dying hour, and take our departing spirits to be with Christ in glory everlasting.

Set up thy glory, O Lord, above the heavens, and let thy name be sanctified in all the earth. Conyert the heathen and infidel world to the faith of thy Son. Give wise and upright rulers to the nations, and let the gospel of Jesus go forth as the sun to enlighten the whole world. Reform the churches which are dark and corrupt. Cast down the tyranny and ungodliness which keep out knowledge, holiness, and peace. Preserve and bless the reformed churches, especially in these kingdoms. Make our rulers faithful to their trust, that they may seek the true prosperity of their country. Teach thou our teachers. Give all thy churches able and faithful pastors, and abundantly succeed their labours ; that their hearers may be fruitful in knowledge and holiness, peace and charity.

Bless all the members of this family, together with all that are near and dear to us, both in body and soul ; and help us to serve each other in love. We thankfully acknowledge thy fatherly goodness manifested to us this day. Be pleased to continue it through the night watches. Give us such rest of body and mind as may fit us for the duties of the the day ensuing. We ask all in the name of Jesus Christ our only Saviour and Mediator. *Amen.*

Thursday Morning.

By the Rev. Dr. Doddridge.

BLESSED God! thou art the great fountain of being and of happiness. As from thee our beings were derived, so from thee our happiness directly flows. The nearer we are to thee, the more pure and delicious is the stream. With thee is the fountain of life: in thy light may we see light. The great object of our final hope is to dwell with thee for ever. O give us some foretaste of that delight.

Give us we beseech thee, the blessedness of that man who feareth the Lord, and who delighteth greatly in his commandments. So form our hearts by thy grace, that, from day to day, we may set the Lord before us, and be in thy fear all the day long.

To thee may our awaking thoughts be daily directed; and with the first ray of light that visits our eyes, lift up, O Lord, the light of thy countenance. When our faculties are roused from sleep, may our first actions be consecrated to thee, O God, who givest us light, and every morning givest us, as it were a new life. Our voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in our retirement, and in our family; in the morning will we direct our prayer unto thee, and will look up. O enable us to pour out our hearts before thee with filial reverence, freedom, and endearment.

With hearts filled with gratitude would we praise thee for past mercies, and in the exercise of a lively faith would we implore fresh blessings, which every

returning day requires. We desire with cheerfulness daily to renew the dedication of ourselves to thee, through Jesus thy beloved Son: and with attention and pleasure read and hearken to the instructions of thy holy word, that we may know what thou wouldst have us to do. Enable us to hide thy word in our hearts, that we may not sin against thee, and earnestly to seek fresh supplies of thy blessed Spirit (whose influences are the life of our souls) that we may be quickened in all the duties which it enjoins.

Being thus prepared, do thou, Lord lead us forth to all the duties and events of the day. In the callings to which thou hast directed us, may we abide with thee: not being slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

(Teach us the value of time, and enable us always to improve it to the best advantage, in such duties as thou hast assigned us, (how long or painful soever they may be). To thy glory, O Lord, may the labours of life be pursued, and to thy glory may the refreshments of it be sought after and enjoyed. Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, may that end still be kept in view, and may it be attained. May every refreshment and release from business prepare us to serve thee with greater vigour and resolution.)

(May our eyes be ever watchful to observe the descent of mercies from thee, and may a grateful sense of thy hand and thy love in them, add a savour and relish to all. While in this world of trial, may we accustom ourselves to expect afflict-

tions; and when they come, may we be reconciled to them, by remembering that they come from thee, and firmly believing that the same love which gives us our daily bread, appoints our daily crosses. May we learn to take them up, and follow our dear Lord, with a temper like that which he manifested when ascending Calvary for our sakes. Like him may we say in all circumstances of trial, "the cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink of it.")

Keep us, O Lord, we pray thee, from the temptations to which we are daily exposed: or if thou sufferest us to enter into temptation, do thou deliver us from evil. Make us sensible of our own weakness, that our hearts may be raised to thee for needful supplies of strength.

When we are engaged in the society of others, may it be our desire and our care that we do and receive as much good as possible. May all our companies and all persons be the better for us. May we be solicitous daily to be answering the great purposes of life, by honouring thee, and desiring knowledge and happiness in the world. Like our blessed Master, may we go about doing good.

When we are alone, may we remember that our heavenly Father is with us: may we enjoy the pleasure of thy presence, and feel the animating power of it, awaken our souls to an earnest desire to think and act as in thy sight.

(Thus may this day, and all our days be spent; and let them always be closed in thy fear, and under a sense of thy gracious presence. Help us to con-

duct ourselves through the hours of every day, whether at home or abroad, whether in company or alone, whether busy or at rest, that we may be able at the close to review it with satisfaction. And, Lord, dispose us seriously and impartially to review the actions of every day, and to judge ourselves for them, as those who expect to be judged of the Lord, and are solicitous to be approved by thee, who searcheth all hearts, and canst not forget any of our works.)

May our prayers come up daily before thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands be as the morning and the evening sacrifice. And O give us daily to enjoy the testimony of our consciences, that we have lived to God ; so that when the season of nature's repose returns, we may with sweet calmness and serenity resign our powers to sleep, under a cheerful persuasion that we are accepted of thee, in Christ Jesus our Lord, and humbly hoping in thy mercy through him, whether our days on earth be prolonged or cut off in the midst.

Help us, O Lord, to spend every day in the review of our last, and so as to fit us for it. If death comes by a slow advance, may it at length find us still thus employed, and if we should be called on a sudden to exchange worlds, may our last days and hours be so spent, as to furnish no occasion for remorse or fear. Whenever or however we are called from this state of trial, may we have a sweet and easy passage from the services of time, to the infinitely nobler services of an immortal state. We ask it through him who when on earth was the

fairest pattern of every virtue, and who now lives and reigns with thee, able to save to the uttermost. To him, having done all, would we fly, with the most humble acknowledgment that we are unprofitable servants. And unto him, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thursday Evening.

By the Rev. M. Henry.

MOST holy, blessed, and glorious Lord God, whose we are, and whom we are bound to serve. Thou hast made us, and not we ourselves, therefore we are not our own, but thine.

Thou art the great benefactor of the whole creation! thou givest unto all life, and breath, and all things. Thou art our benefactor; the God that hast fed us, and kept us all our life long unto this day. Having obtained help of thee, we continue hitherto the monuments of thy mercy, and witnesses for thee that thou art gracious, that thou art God and not man; therefore it is that we are not cut off.

One day telleth another, and one night certifies to another that thou art good, and never failest those that seek thee, and trust in thee. Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and of the evening to praise thee.

It is through the good hand of our God upon us, that we are brought in safety to the close of another day, and that after the various employments of the

day, we come together at night to mention the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of our God, who is good, and whose mercies endure for ever.

Blessed be the Lord who daily loads us with his benefits, even the God of our salvation. We have from thee the mercies of the day, in its day, according as the necessity of the day requires, though we come far short of doing the work of the day in its day, according as the duty of the day requires.

We bless thee for the ministration of good angels about us, the serviceableness of inferior creatures to us, for our bodily health and ease, comfort in our relations, and a comfortable place of abode, that thou hast not made the wilderness our habitation, and the barren land our dwelling; and especially that thou continuest to us the use of our reason, and the quiet and peace of our consciences.

Above all, we bless thee for Jesus Christ, and his mediation between God and man; for the covenant of grace made with us in him, and all the exceeding great and precious promises and privileges of that covenant, for the throne of grace erected for us, to which we may in his name come with humble boldness, and for the hope of eternal life through him.

We confess we have sinned against thee; this day we have sinned and done foolishly, and our sins are not hid from thee; we mispend our time, we neglect our duty, we follow lying vanities, and forsake our own mercies. We offend with our

tongues. Are we not carnal and walk as men, below christians ! Who can understand his errors ? Cleanse us from our secret and unknown faults.

We pray thee give us repentance for our sins of daily infirmity, and make us duly sensible of the evil of them, and of our danger by them ; and let the blood of Christ thy Son cleanse us from all sin, that we may lie down at night at peace with God, and our souls may comfortably return to him, and repose in him as our rest.

Do us good by all the providences we are under, merciful or afflictive ; give us grace to accommodate ourselves to them, and by all bring us nearer to thee, and make us fitter for thee.

We commit ourselves to thee this night, and desire to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Let the Lord be our habitation, and let our souls be at home in him.

(Make a hedge of protection about our house, and about all that we have, that no evil may befall us, nor any plague come nigh our dwelling. Refresh our frail bodies with rest, undisturbed with distrustful cares, or disquieting fears ; but especially let our souls be refreshed with thy love, and the light of thy countenance, for thy benignity is better than life. When we awake, may we be still with thee, may we remember thee upon our beds, and meditate upon thee in the night watches.)

Restore us to another day in safety ; prepare us for the duties and the events of it ; and by all the supports and comforts of this life, let our bodies be

fitted to assist our souls in thy service. And do thou enable us to glorify thee, both with our bodies and with our souls which are thine.

As every day brings us near to our end, Lord, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Lord let our families be blessed in him in whom all the believing families of the earth are blessed. Give us health and prosperity, and all needful temporal blessings ; but especially let our souls prosper and be in health. Let all that belong to us belong to Christ ; that we who dwell together on earth, may be together for ever with the Lord.

“ Look with pity on a lost world. Set up Christ’s throne where Satan’s seat is. Send the Gospel where it is not, and make it successful where it is. Let it be mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. Cause the church of Christ greatly to flourish in all places. Let not the gates of hell prevail against it, nor suffer the rod of the wicked any where to rest upon the lot of the righteous.)

Let the land of our nativity be still the peculiar care of thy good providence. In the peace thereof may we have peace. Let glory dwell in our land, and upon all the glory let there be a defence. Rule the hearts of our rulers, and make them public blessings. May those who are in places of public trust be faithful to the public interest, and may those who bear the sword be a terror to evil doers, and a protection and praise to such as do well.

Own thy ministers in their work: give them skill, ability, and zeal, to help souls to heaven. May the rising generation be such as thou wilt own, and as shall do more and better service in their day, than has been done in ours. Comfort and relieve all that are in poverty and affliction. Teach us to sympathise with them, and dispose us to do all we can for their relief.

And do thou for us abundantly above what we are able to ask or think, through Jesus Christ the Lord our righteousness: to Him, with the Father and Eternal Spirit be glory and praise now and for ever. *Amen.*

Friday Morning.

By the Rev. Mr. Jenks.

O LORD our God! thy name is most excellent in all the earth: thou hast set thy glory above the heavens. and thou art worthy to be celebrated with everlasting praises of men and angels. Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. Thy hands, O Lord, have made us and fashioned us; and thou hast breathed into our nostrils the breath of life; yea still thou holdest our souls in life, and givest us every good thing that makes our lives a blessing and comfort to us. Thou hast formed us for thyself, that we may show forth thy praise, and that we should live to thy glory, as we do live continually by thy bounty.

But, O Lord our God, we have in no respect glorified thee as we ought: yea rather how greatly have we dishonoured thee in the whole course of our lives! Time after time have we forgotten thee, the gracious giver of all our good things, who art ever mindful of us. O how soon have we been weary of doing thee service, who art never weary of doing us good. We have not only neglected thy work, but have been disobedient to thy word, and have walked after our own foolish and hurtful lusts, which might long since have drowned us in destruction and perdition.

For these things we desire to pour out our hearts, and to humble our sinful selves here before thee; and for the sake of that mercy of thine in Christ Jesus, which has moved thee to spare us so long, and to do so much for us already, we entreat thee to pity us. Give us repentance and pardon for all that is past, wherein we have offended thee; whether in omitting our duty, or failing in it, or doing contrary to it. However we have transgressed, O humble us daily, under a sense of it; and for thy dear Son's sake, absolve us thoroughly from the guilt of it, and strengthen us, good Lord, with might by thy Spirit in the inner man; that we may be more watchful against temptation, and more victorious over our corruptions.

O destroy in us every vicious inclination, every evil habit, every rebellious motion, that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and of Christ Jesus our Lord. And increase and confirm in us still more and more, the graces of thy Holy Spirit,

especially those which thou knowest to be most wanting in us, and most necessary for us. Fill us with the knowledge of thy will, with faith in thy promises, and with fear and love of thy holy name. Give us whatever shall make our lives more comfortable to ourselves, more profitable to others, and more honourable to thee our God. And whatever be our condition as to the concerns of the present life, may we still be found in the way of our duty, fearing God and working righteousness: thus may we make our calling and election sure; that so, when heart and flesh shall fail, an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus.

While we supplicate thy mercy for ourselves, we would humbly implore thy blessing, O Lord, on all those whom we ought to remember in our prayers. O bring nigh unto thee all those that are afar off: and make manifest the savour of thy knowledge in every place. O that all who name the name of Christ may depart from iniquity, and so live up to their profession, as to give no just occasion for thine enemies to blaspheme. Let it be the ambition of all thy people to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and by well doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

Be gracious and favourable, O Lord, to thy church, and especially to that part of it which thou hast planted in this nation. Arise, O God, and plead thine own cause. O let not the enemies of thy church ever have cause to say, that they have pre-

vailed against thy people ; but let those that espouse thy cause, and stand up for the defence of thy truth, go on and prosper, and ever have cause to say, the Lord be magnified who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants. Bless, with the choicest of thy blessings, the king, whom thou hast put in authority over us. Protect his person, direct his councils, and prosper all his endeavours for the peace and welfare of his dominions. Give to all magistrates wisdom and courage to defend thy truth, and to do right to all. Make all ministers to be examples of the flock, in all righteousness and holiness of living : and establish all of us to be an holy people ; grant us one heart and one way, that we may fear thee for ever, for the good of us, and of our children after us.

(Comfort all who want the comforts which we enjoy : and relieve the necessities of all thine afflicted people throughout the world. Remember all our friends and benefactors, our kindred after the flesh, and all who are near and dear unto us ; remember them with the favour which thou bearest to thy people. Look also upon our enemies ; forgive them and turn their hearts, and enable us to forgive them as we hope for forgiveness at thy hands. Enable us to overcome their evil with good ; and so to please thee in all our ways, that thou mayest make our enemies to be at peace.)

Hear us we entreat thee, through the riches of thy grace, and the worthiness of thy Son ; in whose merits alone we trust, and to whom, with thyself

and the Holy Ghost, the one God of our salvation, be all praise, and glory ascribed by us, and by all thy people, from this time forth and evermore.

Amen.

Friday Evening.

WE would exalt the Lord our God, this evening. We would humbly worship at his footstool, for the Lord our God is holy. Thou art infinitely pure in thine essence, in all thy perfections, and in all thy works. Most assuredly then, all who approach thy holy mountain should endeavour to worship thee in the beauty of holiness. But who of us, O Lord, can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin?" With thy confessing servants of old, we are constrained to say, (Is. lxiv. 6,) "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." With them also would we pray; "O that thou wouldest rend the heavens; O that thou wouldest come down, and look upon us in the face of thine Anointed." Behold, O God our shield, and for the sake of that atonement which he hath made, pardon, accept of us, and bless us. Another day hath passed over our heads, never to return; a day which we shall be called upon to give an account of. But have we acted as accountable creatures; as those who are daily receiving innumerable benefits; as Christians bought with the blood of thy dear Son? Upon the shedding of his precious blood we found all our

hopes and expectations. Father of mercies, we would return this night to thee, in the firm resolution of being henceforward more faithful to our sacred vows and holy engagements. We would be more watchful over our thoughts, more circumspect in our conversation, and more attentive to every duty that may be incumbent upon us. But, alas ! from past experience we know how little we can depend upon the strength of our own resolutions. Aid us by thy grace ; it alone can be made sufficient for us ; for thy strength is made perfect in weakness itself. O that the law of the spirit of life would make us free from the law of sin and of death. We would be complete in Christ, and would work out the work of our salvation, although with fear and trembling ; because it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Prepare us, O God, for every event and dispensation of thy providence. We are going again, by thy good hand upon us, to take that rest and repose which is necessary for our feeble and mortal frames. O God, who hast been our protector hitherto, who hast caused the outgoings of so many mornings and evenings to rejoice over us ; help us to lie down this night in the faith that thou wilt keep us from all evil, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature. We entreat also, O God, thy favour and thy grace, to be bestowed upon all whom we are bound to pray for. Let the world be filled with thy glory, by the spreading far and wide of the Gospel of thy Son ; that all the ends of the earth may remember, and turn unto the Lord, and

all the kindred of the nations worship before him. In behalf of such as bear the Christian name we would entreat, that peace, and good will, outward plenty, and temporal prosperity, may prevail every where. Cast a favourable regard, O God, towards our own country, and, if consistent with thy holy will, let the liberty and privileges we have so long enjoyed, be handed down to the latest posterity. Bless our magistrates with the true spirit of their several stations. Oh that all our great men were good men, to cause justice with mercy to flow down the land as a stream. We pray for thy special blessing upon all our relations and friends ; and if we have enemies, Father, forgive them, and turn their hearts towards us. We desire to live and die at peace with all men. Keep us, whilst we live, in such a happy disposition and temper of mind ; and when we die, let us enter into that rest which remains for the people of God. We ask all in the name, and for the alone sake of our dear Redeemer.

Amen.

Saturday Morning.

By the Rev. T. Scott.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, we, thy unworthy creatures, desire to bless and thank thee, for the protection and refreshment of sleep during the past night ; the renewed gift of life and a measure of health this morning ; the conveniencies of our dwelling and temporal provision ; the comfort

of kind friends and domestic peace; and all the security and tranquillity which we enjoy in this favoured country. We acknowledge, that we are unworthy of the least of these thy mercies: and we beseech thee, enable us to show our unfeigned gratitude, by alacrity in every part of thy service, and a proper use of all thy benefits.

But we are bound especially to bless and praise thy holy name, O most gracious Father, for the salvation provided for us in thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Without this crowning mercy, no temporal peace or prosperity could have eventually profited us! By thy righteous sentence we are doomed to die. Our present joys, sorrows, cares, and pursuits must soon vanish like the dreams of the past night; we shall shortly open our eyes amidst the important realities of the eternal world. And if thou shouldest in that unchanging state, deal with us in strict justice according to our deserts; our final condemnation would be as inevitable as the stroke of death itself!

But, blessed be thy name, O Lord, our reprieves from the grave may now be improved as opportunities of seeking deliverance from the wrath to come, and of securing an incorruptible and eternal inheritance. Enable us therefore, we humbly pray thee, to regard with diligent attention thy message of reconciliation, through the mediation of Christ, and by faith in his atoning blood. Enlighten our minds to a clear perception, of the nature, glory, and inestimable value of thy great salvation; and fill us with an admiring sense of thy condescending

and compassionate love to lost sinners, in this stupendous method of showing them mercy, and giving them eternal felicity. Here may we see the harmonious display of thy justice and grace, thy holy abhorrence of iniquity and tender love to condemned transgressors ! Help us, we humbly beseech thee, to discover in some measure, that manifold wisdom, and all those glories, which fill the angelic hosts with admiring love, and dictate even to them new songs of rapturous adoration. And, in order that we may learn on earth the worship of heaven, and be now lisping our feeble praises to him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, may we labour for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the incarnate Saviour is exalted to bestow. O enable us to give such diligence in making our calling and election sure, that we may always be confident ; knowing that when we shall be absent from the body, we shall be present with thee in glory. And if any of us have hitherto neglected the one thing needful, resting in a form of godliness, or in some other way deceiving ourselves, may we be stirred up without delay to seek first thy kingdom, and thy righteousness, and to subordinate all other pursuits to this grand concern.

Teach every one of us, O merciful God, to serve thee in our different employments ; doing all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and using our possessions, or improving our talents, as those who duly consider how soon it may be said, " Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest no longer be

steward." Enable us, we intreat thee, so to act at all times, and in all things, that we may joyfully anticipate the summons, and humbly hope to hear the Saviour say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Grant us, O thou fountain of life, such consolations in communion with thee; as may render us superior to the frowns and smiles of the world, and fix our affections on things above.

Teach us also to profit by all thy rebukes and chastisements: that every painful feeling may serve to humble us, to wean us from earthly things, to embitter sin, to endear the love of our suffering Redeemer, to soften our hearts into compassion towards the afflicted, and to bow our wills into submission to thine appointments.

And as thou, O glorious Lord of all, art pleased to permit us to call thee our heavenly Father; grant we intreat thee that the lively exercise of all filial affections, by the sacred influences of the Spirit of adoption, may fully testify that we are indeed the children and heirs of God. O, let it be the ardent desire of our inmost souls, that thy name should be hallowed, thy kingdom established, and thy will done on earth, as it is by all the inhabitants of heaven.

We pray, that thy blessed Gospel may be effectually preached to all the numerous and populous nations, which now sit in pagan darkness or under Mahometan delusion. May plans be formed in wisdom, and executed with zeal for the accomplishment of this great design. O raise up, qualify, and send forth under thy special protection, proper in-

struments for this arduous but honourable service. Pour out thy Spirit from on high upon the nations; that mountains may flow down at thy presence; and that difficulties, now deemed insuperable, may be effectually removed. O prepare the way for such extensive displays of thy glorious grace, by purifying the whole visible church, from all superstition, false doctrine, and unchristian practices; by uniting believers in holy love and harmony; and by rendering all the pastors of thy flock, wise, disinterested, humble, faithful, zealous, and laborious. Stop the fatal progress of infidelity and apostacy from Christ, which mark this degenerate age and nation: and raise up able champions for thy truth, whom thou wilt prosper in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Bless the places of public education, and grant that men may continually be sent forth from them, qualified for these and other important services. Endue with wisdom, animate with zeal, and arm with patience, such persons, as, amidst difficulties and disappointments, are endeavouring to promote the welfare of mankind, and open the way to the spread of thy Gospel: raise them up many helpers, and at length crown their efforts with complete success. Teach, O Lord, all true Christians, to act consistently in their various circumstances and trials; and enable them to adorn thy Gospel, and rejoice in thy salvation: and bless their children also, that they may serve thee in their days, and transmit thy truth to future generations.

O vouchsafe thy special grace to all our dear rela-

tives and friends, whatever else thou mayest see good to withhold from them. Bestow thy blessing on all those, whom thou hast placed in authority over us ; and honour them as thy instruments, in promoting the best interests of these nations. O thou God of peace, be pleased to terminate the ravages of war, and extend thy compassionate regard to all, who in this or any other way, are exposed to those complicated miseries, from which we are mercifully exempted.

Enable us now, we beseech thee, to enter on our several employments, in submission and obedience to thy will, and dependence on thy grace. May we be preserved from the snares of the world, and defended against the assaults of Satan : may we watch over our hearts, govern our passions, and bridle our tongues, as under the inspection of thine all-seeing eye ; and be helped in all things to glorify thy name ; through Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, and our only Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

Saturday Evening.

By the Rev. T. Scott.

O THOU Giver of every good gift, thou Father of mercies and source of consolation : we desire to close this day with thy solemn worship. Accept, we beseech thee, our unfeigned thanksgivings, for the continuance of our lives, health, senses, and rational powers ; for the protection and provision thou hast

hitherto afforded us ; and for all the general and special benefits we enjoy. We would consider them, as coming from thy hand, and as thy unmerited kindness to us thy sinful creatures. But above all, we are bound to bless and thank thee, for the redemption of the world by thy beloved Son ; and for all the blessings of that new covenant, which he secured to us by his death, and is exalted at thy right hand to bestow on all that believe. We thank thee for thy written word, and thy preached Gospel ; and all the abundant spiritual advantages, with which we are favoured. We praise thee, for thy long-suffering toward us, when we disregarded the message of reconciliation, and continued in disobedience ; for delivering us in dangers, and recovering us in sickness, when we were wholly unprepared for death ; and even when we used our lives and health in sinning still more against thee ! It is “ of thy mercies we are not consumed ! ” And if at length we have been renewed to repentance, and enabled to believe thy Gospel, and love thy holy ways ; to thee, O Lord, we would ascribe all the glory of this blessed change ! “ What shall we render to the Lord for all his benefits ? ” Help us, we humbly pray thee, not only to offer at thy mercy seat our feeble sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving ; but to present ourselves also as living sacrifices devoted to thy glory ; and to bless thee with the more decided language of unreserved obedience.

And, while we rejoice in our privileges, consolations, and prospects ; help us, O Lord, to remember the inexpressible sufferings of the divine Saviour,

when "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness:" that looking to him whom we have pierced, we may mourn for our crimes with unfeigned sorrow, become more deeply penitent, and be more determined in crucifying the flesh with all its affections and lusts: and may the love of Christ constrain us to live henceforth more entirely to his glory. Here at Immanuel's cross may we daily learn self-denial, deadness to the world, patience, meekness, forgiveness, and humility; and thus find our hearts prepared to renounce our own ease, interest, or indulgence, in order to honour our Redeemer, and subserve the comfort of those whom he condescends to call his brethren. May we learn to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and, looking to him who endured the cross and despised the shame, may we never be weary and faint under any trials or discouragements.

Help us, O our gracious God, this evening so to examine our ways, and renew our repentance; that we may have peace with thee and our consciences, through the atoning blood, before we close our eyes in sleep: and do thou extinguish every emotion of resentment, or corrupt affection, which the events of the day may have excited; that we may go to rest in sweet charity with all mankind.

Prosper, O Lord, all our undertakings, as far as good for us; and especially all our endeavours to acquire, or to communicate, the knowledge of thy truth and will. Bless thy holy word, which any of thy servants may have spoken in public or private; crown

all their labours with success, and fill their souls with joy and consolation. Enlarge and purify thy church, and let thy grace and peace be multiplied to all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Remember with thy choicest mercies all that pray for us, or desire a place in our supplications ; and whenever we meet with our dear absent friends, may we see new cause, and feel renewed dispositions for thankfulness.

And now, O gracious Father, while we commend ourselves and each other to thy special protection this night ; “teach us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom :” and grant, that whether we live or die, we may be thine for ever. Hear us, we humbly intreat thee, and exceed all we ask, or can conceive, according to the riches of thy mercy in Christ Jesus : for whom we bless thy name, and to whom with thyself, and the eternal Spirit, we would ascribe all glory, praise, adoration, and thanksgiving, both now and for evermore.
Amen.

SECOND WEEK.

Prayer for Lord's Day Morning.

O LORD God Almighty! which art, and wast, and art to come; without beginning of years, or end of days! Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting thou art God. Thy name shall endure for ever, and thy memorial to all generations. Thou art our creator, preserver, and benefactor. By thee we have been kept and fed all our lives, and every day. In thee we have lived, and moved, and had our being; and unto thee, O Lord, do we now desire to lift up our souls.—We are this day called upon more especially to contemplate thy manifold and marvellous works. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and praise, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. When we survey the variety of creatures around us, we see abundant proofs not only of thy power and wisdom, but also of thy goodness. Manifold are thy works, O Lord, in wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy riches.

But, O heavenly Father, while we adore the displays of thy glory in the works of nature and crea-

tion, we would never forget the wonders of thy grace! When we contemplate the stupendous, and amazing plan of our redemption, and think on a dying, rising, and ascending Saviour, we feel that this is to us sinful creatures, the most endearing of all the discoveries thou hast made of thyself. Here we behold thy hatred of sin and love to sinners; and here, O Lord most holy, thou hast given us the fullest display of the harmonious glories of thy character. O thou who didst command the light to shine out of darkness, shine into our hearts, and give us more of the light of thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Enable us by the teaching of thy Holy Spirit, so to meditate on thy word of grace, that our hearts may be humbled in repentance, inspired with confidence in thy mercy, and enjoy saving communion with thee, through thy dear Son, in whom thou art well pleased. O satisfy us early with thy goodness that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Lift upon us the light of thy countenance at this time, and bless to us all the means of grace both private and public, in which we may be engaged. May this Sabbath be a day of spiritual feasting, and heavenly joy to our souls. Let us see thy goings, as we have seen thee in thy sanctuary, O our King and our God. Remember us, O Lord, with the favour which thou bearest towards thy chosen, and visit us with thy salvation. Bless the provision of thy house, and satisfy thy poor with bread. Open thou our lips, and our mouth shall show forth thy praise. Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee.

Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation. O satisfy us this day with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Here let our doubts be solved, our hearts confirmed, our resolutions invigorated; and by waiting upon thee, may our strength be renewed, that we may mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. Grant that according to the riches of thy grace we may be strengthened with might in the inner man, to all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. O that we may indeed be the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, walk as he walked, and proceed in the paths of truth and righteousness, in the way to a blessed immortality. To this end enable us to look to Jesus, and to live upon him by faith; that being washed in his blood, clothed in his righteousness, and sanctified by his grace, we may rejoice in him with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Bless all thy ministering servants throughout the world. Bestow upon them a double portion of thy Holy Spirit. Let utterance be given to them, that they may open their mouths boldly to make known the mysteries of the Gospel, and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. May they obtain mercy to be faithful to thy truth, and the souls entrusted to their care. Make them mighty through thy power to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin; by their instrumentality ride forth in the chariot of the Gospel, conquering and to conquer. Make the arrows of thy word sharp in the hearts of thine enemies, whereby the people may fall under

thee. Cause a gale of heavenly wind this day to blow, that many dry bones may be enlivened, many dead souls quickened. May many be brought to believe the report of the Gospel, and be built up in knowledge, faith, holiness, and comfort.

Have compassion upon those who may by sickness, or infirmity, be detained from thy house. Help them to worship towards thy holy temple, and to remember with gratitude thy former loving kindness. Give them a comfortable sense of thy presence, enabling them to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh.

Be with us through the day ; prepare our hearts to receive thy word, and assist us in all things to glorify thy name, that we may meet in the evening with peaceful consciences, and thankful hearts. Hear us, O our God, through the merits and meditation of thy beloved Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Lord's Day Evening.

O LORD our God and Father, thou hast invited us to thyself by thy manifold mercies ; and it is both our privilege and our duty to seek thee, and to call upon thee. Thou hast been pleased graciously to reveal thyself to us, as far as our wants and welfare require. We have this evening to acknowledge the blessings, not only of another day, but of another

Sabbath. Another of the days of the Son of man has been added to our mortal existence; and we not only behold our Sabbaths, but our eyes also see our teachers, and our ears hear the joyful sound of salvation, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see the things that we see, and did not see them; and to hear the things that we hear. But blessed are our eyes, for they see, and our ears, for they hear. O that for these and all thy mercies we may be unfeignedly thankful, and be constrained to show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but with our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness all our days. Hitherto we have been compelled to deplore our unfruitfulness; and how little we have learned and improved, and enjoyed of thy word. How little our hearts and lives have been influenced and governed by the encouraging, purifying, elevating truths we have so often heard, and professed to receive.

But it is our mercy that thou despisest not the day of small things, and that thou hast promised to give more grace, and to perfect that which concerneth us. The bruised reed thou wilt not break, and the smoking flax thou wilt not quench, but wilt bring forth judgment unto victory. May we therefore not only be humble, but active; may we arise and be doing, and may our God be with us; may we be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and increase with all the increase of God.

To this end may we believe the report we have heard this day; and keep in memory what has been

preached unto us. For, O God, we know that it is only by faith that we stand, and walk in thy ways. Let us not be of the number of those, who are always learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Give us clear and consistent views of divine revelation, that we may meditate on thy word with comfort, and wait on thee without distraction. May we hide thy word in our hearts; and may the truth as it is in Jesus, illuminate in us all that is dark, strengthen in us all that is weak and wavering, accomplish in us all the good pleasure of thy goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of the Lord may be glorified in us, and that we may be glorified in him. May we walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good word and work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his gracious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. We can never discharge the obligations thy great mercies have laid us under; but we would ever be sensible of them, and be grateful for them. May thy love be shed abroad in our hearts, that none of thy commandments may be grievous; but may we esteem all thy precepts in all things to be right, and hate every false way.

Bless this family. May those of us who are at the head of it, be enabled to walk within our house with a perfect heart, and set no wicked thing before our eyes. Let this be our rejoicing, even the

testimony of a good conscience, knowing, that in simplicity and Godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, by the grace of God we have our conversation in the world, in the family, and in the church. Have compassion on those who have been deprived of the public means of grace, by sickness, or distance from them. Let them know that thou art not confined to temples made with hands. There are many we believe whose hearts are in thy ways, but whose feet are not permitted to tread thy courts. Be with each of their souls, O God, and manifest thyself to them ; say unto them, I am thy salvation. And we pray thee also to send forth thy light and truth, to such as are ignorant and out of the way of instruction. Let thy way be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. We now again commit ourselves with all our relations and friends into thy holy keeping. Guard us in our unguarded and defenceless hours of repose, and defend us from the perils of this night. If we are continued in being, and permitted to see a new day, may we awake in peace, arise in health, and follow thee in thy ways. What thou hast seen amiss in us, or in our services this day, do thou graciously forgive, for the sake of Him who bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors, to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit be glory and praise for ever. *Amen.*

Monday Morning.

By the Rev. Mr. Bennett.

BLESSED and glorious God; thou art the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; the Father of mercies, and God of all grace. We are not worthy of the least of all thy blessings, and yet how large a share have we had of them! Open thou our lips, and our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

We are thy creatures, O Lord, whose hands have made and fashioned us; thou art the Father of our spirits, and our bodies are thy workmanship.

(We bless thee for thy tender care of us in the helpless state of infancy, and for the attendance of thy providence ever since. Thou hast fed us all our life long, and redeemed us from evil. We bless thee for preservation (or recovery) from sickness, and for deliverance from the many dangers to which we have been exposed. Thou hast, in love to our souls, saved us from the pit of corruption, and hast delivered our eyes from tears, our feet from falling, and our souls from death. O may thy goodness lead us to repentance, and may we walk before the Lord in the land of the living.)

We praise thee that we were born in a land enjoying the Gospel, and not in the region of the shadow of death: neither among pagans, who have not the bible, nor papists, who are forbid the use of it.

Thou hast showed unto us thy word and thy statutes, thy grace and covenant; thou hast not dealt so with many other nations. We bless thee for the Gospel itself, and for thy Son, the Redeemer of lost sinners therein revealed. May his name be unto us as ointment poured forth. Blessed be God who hath so loved the world as to send his only begotten Son into it, that the world through him might be saved. We bless thee for his holy life, his meritorious death, his triumphant resurrection, his ascension to thy right hand, and the intercession which he there ever lives to make for us.

(We bless thee for thy Spirit, which thou hast sent to abide with thy church for ever, to convince of sin, to sanctify the heart, and to dwell in the souls of believers. O may that blessed Spirit take up his abode in our souls, to enlighten, to quicken, to sanctify, and to comfort us.)

We bless thee for the appointment of a Gospel ministry in the church, as the means of converting sinners, and edifying the body of Christ; and for the opportunities we have enjoyed for attending the ordinances of the Gospel. Lord teach us to profit by them, and make thy word the savour of life unto life to our souls.

We would be particularly thankful that we were born of pious parents, or have been cast in the families of those professing the Gospel, who were concerned to bring us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We bless thee for their repeated instructions, faithful admonitions, seasonable corrections, holy examples, and affectionate prayers. O our

God, grant that all may not be in vain, and that we may not be after all cumberers of the ground. Water all these means with thine heavenly influence, and make us fruitful in every good word and work.

(We bless thee for all the restraints of thy grace and providence; that we are not as vile and profane as others. We thank thee for the good impressions which thou hast made on our souls; and especially for any ground to hope that thou hast begun thy good work in any of us. Lord strengthen what thou hast wrought, grant us more evidence of it, and perform it to the day of Jesus Christ.)

Make us more thankful for all thy mercies, and help us not only to speak, but to live to thy praise. We lament our past ingratitude. What unsuitable returns have we made for that goodness of thine, which has followed us all our days! We earnestly implore thy pardoning mercy, through the great Mediator, and would as earnestly entreat thy quickening influence, that we may love thee more, and serve thee better.

(Help us to put on the whole armour of God, that we may stand against the wiles of the devil, and withstand in the evil day. Keep us from the evil of the world, and give us that faith which will overcome it. Teach us our duty in all its parts, and make us complete in all the will of God. Help us to walk in the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Enable us to discharge our duty aright towards our fellow creatures, according to our several relations. May we love our neighbour as ourselves, walk uprightly, speaking the truth in our hearts,

not backbiting with our tongues, nor taking up a reproach against our neighbour. May we do justly, and love mercy as well as walk humbly with our God. Teach us to love and pity our enemies, to wish them blessings who curse us, and to forgive them that do us evil, as thou for Christ's sake hast forgiven us. May the conclusion of every week, and of every duty, lead us to consider our latter end, and diligently to prepare for it. Let us not presume upon long life, or talk of goods laid up for many years, since we know not how soon our souls may be required of us. Lord teach us so to number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom. Whatsoever our hand findeth to do, may we do it with all our might, since there is no work, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave, whither we are hastening.)

And now, Lord, what wait we for? our hope is in thee. Let thine ears be open unto the supplications of thy servants. Accept our acknowledgements for the mercy of the night past. Take care of us through this day. Fit us for the duties and trials of every day, and prepare us for our last.

All which we beg in the name, and through the mediation, of the Lord Jesus, who has taught us to pray after this manner. Our Father, &c.

Monday Evening.

By the Rev. Mr. May.

INFINITE and everlasting God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. We adore thee for the displays which thou hast made of thy perfections, in all the works of thine hands. But more especially would we adore thee as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in him, the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, reconciling a guilty world to thyself. We bless thee that thou hast published, by him, the method of reconciliation and access to thyself, wherein thou hast abounded in wisdom and goodness.

In this happy way of thine appointment do we sinners now approach thee. May our prayers come up before thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. May this our sacrifice be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, for the sake of that altar on which we present it, even Jesus Christ.

Blessed be thy name, O thou never-failing source of goodness, for the preservation and comfort of another day. By thy good hand upon us, O God, we are brought to the close of another day. Thanks be to thee, that instead of being dispersed, or confined by any of the calamities to which we are ever exposed, no melancholy providence prevents

our meeting together in peace and comfort this evening before thy throne of mercy.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his benefits, who feeds us with food convenient for us, and continues our health and daily comforts. We will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in our mouths. O may we not only with our lips, but in our lives also, show forth thy praise.

Forgive us, gracious God, that our hearts have been so little affected with thy goodness, and that our lives have so little expressed the sense we ought to have of our obligations. Innumerable are our offences, and highly aggravated our wilful sins, as committed against the clearest light, and the strongest love. Lord have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

(The day past, which has witnessed our ingratitude. A slight review of every day convinces us how defective we are, and gives us reason for complaint, that we leave undone the things we ought to do, and that we do those things which ought not to be done.)

Father, we have sinned against heaven before thee, and are not worthy to be called thy children. O lay not our sins to our charge, but give us a comfortable sense of thy forgiving mercy. Pardon especially whatever we may have done amiss this day, and grant that we may lie down this night at peace with thee, as well as with our fellow creatures. Thus may our slumbers be sweet, and our awaking pleasant with the returning morning.

As the shadow of one evening after another is spread over us, may we be more seriously thoughtful about that night, when we shall lie down to rise not till the heavens be no more; being above all things, concerned to stand approved in thy sight at the dawn of that awful morning, when many shall wish to have lain in everlasting night, and shall call, but in vain, to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. O let not any of our family be of that wretched number.

(To prevent so dreadful an end, Lord help us to examine ourselves now, and let us never rest satisfied with any course of life which will not bear the light of thy tribunal. Search us, O God, and try us, if there be in us any evil way, discover it to us, and lead us into the way of life everlasting: so that, when nights and days shall cease, and this world shall be all in flames, we may lift up our heads with joy, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh.)

May all the children of men be taught the knowledge of thyself: may the heathen fear thy name, and all the kindred of the earth see thy glory, and believe in thy Son. Put a period we pray thee to all corruption of true religion. Root out persecuting principles, and heal uncharitable spirits. Let not the rod of the wicked rest upon the lot of the righteous. Grace, mercy, and peace, be with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Lord, continue to these nations the blessings

which we enjoy, and avert the judgments we have deserved. Reform, and do not destroy us. Let thy long-suffering lead us to repentance. May the king's throne be established in righteousness : in his day may the righteous flourish, and let peace and truth prevail. Revive thy work, O Lord, in the midst of the years, and prosper all employed in the service of the Gospel. Bless all our relations and friends : remember them with the favour thou bearest to thy own people. Have compassion on the afflicted, deliver the poor that cry unto thee, and the fatherless that have none to help them. Lord, hear and accept us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

Tuesday Morning.

By the Rev. Mr. Venn.

O THOU Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of glory, who hast so loved the world as to give thy only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ; mercifully regard us miserable sinners. Thou seest how slow of heart we are to believe the record thou hast given of thy Son. Though we have read of his glory, how little does it affect us ! though he has a name above every name in heaven or earth, how little affiance do we feel in him ! or consolation from all that he hath done and suffered !

Have compassion upon us, O Lord, and help us. Give us what thou hast graciously promised, the spirit of truth, to open our understanding, that we may understand the things which are spoken of thy Son in the Scriptures. O give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him ; of his person and his offices, of his love and power toward all that hear his voice and follow him ; that so we may abound in clear, magnificent, and endearing thoughts of Christ Jesus the Lord, that he may be no less precious to us than he was to the glorious company of the apostles, and the noble army of martyrs. Thou, O God, hast declared that thy name shall be exalted, and extolled, and shall be very high. Help us we earnestly pray thee to give this honour day by day more perfectly. Enable us to comprehend with all saints the immeasurable extent of thy love ; the breadth and length, the depth and height thereof.

We beg this of thee, O our God, in order that we may have our affections raised up to heaven, where Christ sitteth on thy right hand ; that we grow more dead to the world, and walk more becoming our Christian character ; that we may be enriched as much as possible with light and grace, joy and peace in this present life ; and so show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into marvellous light.

We beseech thee that the excellency of the knowledge of Christ may be evidenced to others, by our adding day by day to our faith a noble Christian courage, a defence of his truth, honour, and govern-

ment ; by a constant victory over our corrupt affections ; by a moderate use of all lawful comforts ; by a meek and quiet spirit under all our trials ; and by a resignation to the will of our heavenly Father.

(Grant, O Lord, that our knowledge of the redemption that is in Jesus, may work effectually this day upon our hearts. Let the Saviour's love to us, be the pattern of ours to all that are round about us ; let it make us zealous to embrace all opportunities of ministering to the happiness of one another. If we cannot assist the needy by our alms, or protect the oppressed by our power, O let us diligently exercise love, in abstaining from all uncharitableness of speech, from all frowardness and evil tempers : let us look upon the failings of others with pity, as if they were our own ; make us kind and tender hearted, forbearing and forgiving, as thou for Christ's sake hast forgiven us. Banish from our dwelling all variance, whispering, heart-burnings, and surmisings. Let peace and gentleness, meekness and goodness, be exercised by all of us one towards another, and the only contention in our family be, who shall conform most to the will of God, by abounding in brotherly kindness and fervent charity. Thou God, that makest men to be of one mind that dwell together, inspire us with a spirit of concord, and harmonize all our naturally selfish tempers. O let this benefit at least be found from our family devotion, that we agree better together, and live more in peace and quietness, than those who call not upon thee ; who lie down and rise up like the herd

of the stall, never saying, where is God our Maker?

Continue, we beseech thee, if it seemeth good to thee, the voice of health and strength amongst us, and the favour of thy prosperous providence; but give us grace to expect and be ready for a change. And, as in a day, yea, in an hour, our prosperity may be turned by thee into deep affliction, our health into pining, our ease into tormenting pain, and our life into death, O Lord God, establish us in Christ Jesus, and give us the earnest of thy love in our hearts, that whatever we are called to suffer, we may not be afraid with any amazement, but bear our cross cheerfully to the edification of those around us.

Comfort and protect continually all our near relations and dear friends. Sanctify to them their present circumstances whatever they are. May they mind the things of the Spirit, and never be deluded by the things of time and sense. Be their guide through life, and at death give them admission into thy kingdom and glory.

Promote, O God, the peace and welfare of this our country. Let thy servant our King be continually guided by thy counsel, and reign over us in righteousness. May he and his ministers with unwearied labour seek to promote thy glory and his people's good.

Visit and relieve all who are distressed or oppressed; regard their tears, hear their sighs, and give them to see their sin in their suffering, to humble themselves under thy hand, and find that it is good

for them to be afflicted. Bless our enemies, do good to them that hate us, and ever enable us to return good will for evil.)

Accept our praises for our continual preservation by thy goodness, which has brought us into being: for sleep upon our beds, for the return of the day after the shades of darkness, for the use of our reason, the comfort of this opportunity of worshipping thy name, and above all for the light of life, the Sun of Righteousness, Christ Jesus; for whom, with all that is within us, we would bless thy name; in whom we commend ourselves and our services to thee, and to whom with thyself and the Holy Ghost, one God over all, be all honour and praise, love and obedience for evermore. *Amen.*

Tuesday Evening.

By the Rev. A. Toplady, A. M.

BLESSED are they, O Lord, who dwell in thy house, and blessed is the house where thou dwellest: blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, and in whose heart are thy ways. May that blessedness be ours, and may the Lord whom we seek, visit us with his presence, and rejoice us with the tokens of his love, in and through his adorable Son, and our Saviour. *Amen.*

O Lord, we desire to seek thy face, and to wait upon thee in the duties of thy worship. To whom

should we make our applications but unto thee, the Father of mercies, and the fountain of all goodness, who art able to do exceeding abundantly for us, even above all that we are able to ask or think. O let our prayer and the lifting up of our hands and hearts be a spiritual evening sacrifice, acceptable unto thee in the Son of thy love; it is in his blessed name alone that we dare to request of thee all that thou knowest to be needful and expedient for us, seeing that there is in us no good thing to recommend us to thy favour and acceptance; but on the contrary, a proneness and inclination to what is displeasing to thee, and destructive to our souls: for, besides that we are by nature children of wrath, and a seed of evil doers, we have been daily adding to the heavy score of our offences against thee. There is nothing in us, O Lord, but what may provoke thee to reject us; for all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags: but there is enough in thy beloved Son, of all grace and goodness, to make thee well pleased with us for his sake. He who knew no sin, bore our sins, and was made a sin offering, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us near unto thee. For his sake blot out our manifold transgressions, apply the benefits of thy salvation to our consciences, that we may be enabled to walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance, and rejoice in hope of thy glory. O certify us by thy blessed Spirit, and by the tokens of thy grace, that we are of the happy number of thy chosen; that we are loved with an everlasting love, and interested in the sure mercies of David.

Increase and confirm in us more and more thy faith, fear, and love. Let not one grace of thy Holy Spirit be wanting; let not one be weak, but grant us such manifestations of thyself, and so conform us to the image of thy holiness, that our lives may be comfortable to ourselves, profitable to others, and bring glory to thy great name.

Lord, guide and keep us; make us wise and faithful in our several duties, and give us desirable success in our lawful calling. Grant that we may take nothing in hand but what is warranted by thy word, and agreeable to thy will concerning us. Lord, thou knowest our weakness, and the temptations to which we are exposed: O give us a sufficient measure of thy Holy Spirit to enable us to withstand them. O enable us to look to thee, from whom comes all our help; and in thee make us repose all our hope. Establish us in thy love, and strengthen us to perform thy will. May thy almighty Spirit so write thy law in our hearts, that it may be our meat and drink to do thy will; that we may hate all iniquity, and every false way; and thus resemble our blessed Jesus, as our pattern, while we trust in his merit as our propitiation.

Be with all thine every where. Visit them in particular with thy salvation, whom we desire to bear upon our hearts before thee. May those who are near and dear to us, be near and dear to God. And whatever separation thy good providence may make on earth, O grant that we and they may meet with joy at thy right hand, in the day of judgment.

Bless the sinful nation of which we are a sinful

part. Maintain the cause of thy truth, and enlarge the kingdom of thy Son amongst us.

Remember for good thy faithful people of every denomination ; more especially regard with thy choicest favour the church to which we belong ; may we be rooted and grounded in love, and filled with all the fulness of God. Bless all thy ministering servants throughout the world. May they obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful to thee, to thy truth, and to the souls entrusted to their care. May they be mighty through thee to the conviction and conversion of sinners, and to build up believers in their most holy faith.

And now, O Lord, we beseech thee to hear these our prayers, and to accept our evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the mercies of the day past, and for thy unwearied goodness which has followed us all the days of our lives. Continue thy goodness towards us to-night ; may we, as the beloved of the Lord, dwell in safety by him. Make us to rest under thy defence, O thou Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Every temporal and spiritual mercy we request, for the sake of Jesus Christ the righteous. *Amen.*

Wednesday Morning.

INFINITE and incomprehensible Jehovah ! thou art the high and lofty One who inhabitest eternity, and dwellest in the light which no man can ap-

proach unto. From thy glorious throne thou lookest down upon the sons of men, and beholdest at a single glance all things past, present, and to come. The events of the remotest ages, and the purposes which are still in the womb of futurity, are at once open to thine all-seeing eye, and thou art intimately acquainted with the most secret thoughts of all thy creatures.

O that the recollection of thy power and thy presence may solemnize our minds, and influence our hearts, in all our addresses at the footstool of thy throne. Let us ever recollect that thou art an infinitely holy Creator, and that we are vile, worthless, and contaminated creatures; sinners both by nature and practice, and sensible that everlasting destruction must finally overwhelm us, were it not for the tender mercies of thy dear Son. But, thanks to thy eternal goodness, we are emboldened and encouraged to come before thee in his name; to make known our supplications unto thee; and to ask at thy bounteous hands every needful blessing, support, and consolation.

Thou hast assured us by thy blessed word, that if we commit our concerns to thee, and acknowledge thee in all our ways, thou wilt establish our thoughts and direct our path. We therefore humbly desire to put ourselves under thy wise direction, and to be led implicitly by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit; so that all our doings may be well pleasing in thy sight, and that we may be enabled to glorify thee in our day and generation.

We know, notwithstanding the evil propensities

of our nature, that thou art able to keep us from falling, and to work in us that which is well pleasing in thy sight: and thou hast graciously exhorted us to come unto thee, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. We therefore pray that thy Spirit may help our infirmities, and strengthen us with all might in the inner man, that we may still go forth in the strength of the Lord, and apply ourselves with vigour and activity to the performance of thy holy will.

Open our eyes, that we may behold the wondrous things of thy law; and illuminate our understanding, that we may plainly discern those things which pertain to our everlasting peace. O incline our ears and our hearts to the dictates of pure wisdom, that we may follow on to know the Lord: yea, that we may know what is the hope of thy calling, and what the riches of the glory of thine inheritance.

Deliver us, holy Father, from the love of sin, and the power of temptation; and teach us to use and possess the enjoyments of this present life without abusing them, and without suffering them to engross our affections. We long, O God, to be more zealously devoted to thee; to possess more and more of the spirit of true holiness; and to testify to all men, by our life, conduct, and conversation, that we are the disciples of the meek and holy Jesus. In him thou hast treasured up an infinite fulness of all that we can ever want or wish. O that we may receive out of this fulness all those gifts which are the purchase of his blood, and the necessary means of our salvation. Through the

abundance of his grace, deign to accept and justify our persons; to renew and sanctify our souls; and to transform us into thy blessed image; that we may think, and speak, and act, as becometh saints; ever striving to live unto the praise of him who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

We desire, O Lord, to present our most fervent and unfeigned thanks to thee, for all the blessings of the past night. The sleep with which we have been refreshed, the light of returning day, and the continuance of health and strength, unitedly call upon us to bless thy name, and to adore thee for these repeated demonstrations of thy tender and paternal goodness. All our attempts to set forth thy glory are indeed feeble and imperfect; but thou lookest on the heart, and art ever ready to accept the praise of thy most feeble creatures, who desire to ascribe the honour due to thy holy name. Give us, therefore, that due sense of all thy mercies; that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath taught us to address thee as—
Our Father, &c.

Wednesday Evening.

By the Rev. Mr. Willison.

O LORD, the high and lofty One who inhabitest eternity, and whose name is holy: when we consider the awful glories of thy nature, we, mean and sinful creatures, have cause exceedingly to fear and tremble on appearing in thy presence. But when we think of thy encouraging promises, and the discoveries of thy mercy, our drooping spirits are revived. Thou hast said, that though thou dwellest in the high and holy place, thou wilt also dwell with him who is of an humble and contrite spirit: that the needy shall not always be forgotten, and the expectation of the poor shall not perish. Lord, remember thy word unto thy servants, upon which thou hast caused us to hope.

Promote in us that contrition and brokenness of heart, in which thou hast so much delight, and be graciously pleased to take up thine abode with us. Dwell in our house, and dwell in our hearts, and manifest to us the tokens of thy favour and presence.

Thou hast already done great things for us, of which we are glad. We would this evening call upon our souls, and upon one another, to bless the name of the Lord. Blessed be God, who daily lendeth us with benefits. Thou preservest us in going out and coming in. Thou spreadest our table, and makest our cup run over. Thou givest rest on every side. Lord, what shall we render unto thee for our personal and family mercies?

particularly for our health and strength, our peace and liberty, our safety and protection, our food and raiment, our social comforts and relative enjoyments! Above all, we bless thee that thou causest the heavenly manna to be rained down about our tents: that thou continuest with us the light of the glorious Gospel, and the means of knowledge, holiness, and happiness. In regard to spiritual privileges we are favoured above multitudes of our fellow creatures, and even of our fellow christians.

But, Lord, we confess, to our shame, that we have not rendered unto thee according to the benefits we have received. We have sinned times and ways without number. We lament before thee our personal iniquities and family sins: our vain words, our unprofitable converse, our neglect of relative duties, our misimprovement of our time, and our abuse of our various talents for usefulness.

Look upon us, O Lord, in mercy, through thy beloved Son, who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. Let the merits of his righteousness be upon us, and by his stripes may we be healed. We pray, that thou who givest us our daily bread, wilt for Christ's sake also forgive us our daily trespasses. Pardon whatever thou hast seen amiss in us through the past day; and, notwithstanding our great unworthiness, we plead that, of thy free bounty, thou wilt continue thy former care and protection over us this night.

How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore do the children of men put their trust

under the shadow of thy wings. Because thou hast commanded thy loving kindness in the day time, therefore in the night shall thy song be with us, and our prayer to the God of our life. Thou art the keeper of Israel, who never slumberest nor sleepest. Command thine angels to encamp round about us, that we may not be afraid of any terror by night; and be pleased to refresh us with sufficient rest, that we may be fitted for the duties of the following day.

(We bless thee, O God, that we have a place where to lay our head; that we are not wandering in deserts and mountains, or driven into dens and caves of the earth. O how much better are we provided for than our dear Saviour was, or than many of whom the world was not worthy! May our hearts be suitably impressed with a sense of thy mercies; and as thou art never weary of doing us good, may we never be weary of serving thee.)

Watch over our family continually, and send down such blessings upon it as thou didst on the house of Obed-edom for the ark's sake. Banish sin from among us. Implant thy fear in all our hearts. Let us dwell together in unity, and do thou command thy blessing upon us, even life for evermore.

Extend the hand of thy love and mercy, O Lord, to the utmost corners of the earth, and to them that are afar off upon the sea. Let such as sit in darkness and the shadow of death, see thy light and thy truth, and know the joy of thy salvation.

Be merciful to our native country. Give thy

judgments to the King, and thy righteousness to the King's son. May our magistrates fear God and hate evil. May those who minister in holy things be blessed with skilful heads, compassionate hearts, and exemplary lives. Convert the unconverted, and perfect the good work where it is begun. Enlighten the ignorant; awaken the secure; convince the erroneous; reclaim the vicious; establish the wavering; comfort the dejected; and visit the sick and afflicted. Bless all our relations and friends; forgive our enemies, and turn their hearts. Direct our ways so to please thee, that even our enemies may be at peace with us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Thursday Morning.

Selected chiefly from those used in the Established Church.

THANKSGIVING:

ALMIGHTY God! Father of all mercies, we, thine unworthy servants, desire humbly to present ourselves before thy divine majesty, to offer thee our morning sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, for all thy goodness and loving kindness vouchsafed to us thy sinful creatures. We bless thee for creating us capable of loving and enjoying thee eter-

nally. We thank thee for preserving us from innumerable accidents and dangers to which we have been exposed through the whole course of our lives: for refreshing our bodies the night past with comfortable rest and sleep, and that thou hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day.

We praise and bless thee for our food and raiment; for our health and friends, and all the blessings and comforts of this life; but above all we praise and magnify thy holy name, for thine inestimable love manifested in the redemption of our souls, by our Lord Jesus Christ; for creating us anew, and giving us the hope of endless glory in him. We beseech thee to give us such a due sense of thy great and manifold mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may show forth thy praise, by walking before thee in humble and holy obedience, all our days.

CONFESSION.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that we have rendered ourselves utterly unworthy of the least of thy favours and blessings, by our manifold transgressions of thy holy laws. We have both left undone the things which thou hast commanded, and done those things which thou hast forbidden. Our hearts are depraved and sinful, and our lives have declared it. It is of thy mercy alone that we are not consumed. Our sins testify against us, and our iniquities justly call for vengeance upon us.

PETITION.

But with thee there is mercy, that thou mayest be feared and served by thy offending creatures. Graciously forgive us our trespasses, and receive us, and comfort us who are grieved and wearied with the burden of our sins. Enter not into judgment with thy servants, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man be justified. Grant us pardon and peace through thy well beloved Son, and according to thy promises declared unto mankind in him. O satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

And thou, O God, who art the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is pure: increase and multiply upon us thy grace, that thou being our ruler and guide, we may pass through things that are temporal, so that we finally lose not the things eternal.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without thee: grant us therefore the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments, we may please thee both in will and deed.

O thou who never failest to keep and govern them whom thou dost bring up in thy steadfast fear and love, keep us, we beseech thee, under the protection of thy good providence, and incline us to a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name. Give unto us, O Lord, the increase of faith, hope, and charity, and that we may obtain that which thou

dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command.

Thou hast taught us that all our doings, without charity, are nothing worth ; send down thy Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift, the very bond of peace and perfectness ; without which, whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee. And since thou hast given thy only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life, give us grace, that we may always most thankfully receive these most inestimable benefits, and also daily endeavour to follow his steps.

Teach us also to see how frail and uncertain our condition is in this world, and so to number our days, that we may seriously apply our hearts unto heavenly wisdom ; and grant, that as we are baptized into the death of thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, so, by continually mortifying our corrupt affections, we may be buried with him, and rise to newness of life here, and to life eternal hereafter.

Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, O Lord, to direct, sanctify, and govern us this day, and so defend us in the same with thy mighty power, that we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is right in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

INTERCESSION.

Accept, O Lord, our prayers and supplications.

for all sorts and conditions of men. Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, and Infidels, and turn their hearts unto thee, by faith in Jesus Christ. Give thy Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the world for his possession. Bless the endeavours of those who are engaged in propagating christian knowledge, that thy ways may be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations.

We beseech thee to keep thy household, the church, in continual godliness, that through thy protection it may be free from all adversities, and devoutly given to serve thee in good works to the glory of thy great name. Scatter her enemies, defeat their counsels, assuage their malice, and confound their devices, show them their own sin and folly, have mercy upon them and turn their hearts.

Grant that all who profess thy name may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in godly love, holding the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.

Bless our governors, and prosper their consultations, that all things may be so ordered and settled by their endeavours, upon the best and surest foundations; that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us for all generations. May all inferior magistrates be faithful to administer justice to the punishment of wickedness, and to the encouragement of religion and virtue.

And of thy goodness, O Lord, comfort and succour all those who, in this transitory life are in

trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. Look upon them with the eyes of thy mercy, give them comfort and sure confidence in thee, and in thy due time a happy deliverance out of all their afflictions. Assist those who draw near to the time of their dissolution, and so fit and prepare them against the hour of death, that after their departure in peace and in thy favour, they may be received into thine everlasting kingdom. O Lord, mercifully incline thine ear to us that have now made our prayers and supplications unto thee; and grant that those things that we have faithfully asked according to thy will, may be effectually obtained to the relief of our necessities, and to the setting forth of thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose blessed name and words we continue to pray, saying—Our Father, &c.

Thursday Evening.

Selected chiefly from those used in the Established Church.

INVOCATION.

ALMIGHTY God! the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our merciful God and Father in him; assist us in all our prayers and supplications which we make unto thee, the fountain of all goodness.

CONFESSION.

We would humbly acknowledge and bewail our

manifold sins, which we, from time to time, have committed in thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty.

PETITION.

Have mercy upon us, O Lord, after thy great goodness, and according to the multitude of thy mercies do away our offences; wash us thoroughly from our wickedness, and cleanse us from our sins; create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, truly lamenting our past follies, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness.

Help us, O Lord, for the time to come, to think and do such things as are right; may thy grace always so prevent and follow us as to cause us continually to obey thy commandments. And thou, O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our fallen natures we cannot always stand upright; grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations.

Help us, O Lord, to withstand the assaults of the enemies of our salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil. Inspire in our souls the love of thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and in thy great mercy keep us in the same. O God! whose never failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, put from us we beseech thee all hurtful things, and give

us those things which are profitable for us; and since it is thou that canst govern the unruly will and affections of sinful men, grant that we may love the things that thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise, that so among the manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found. Dispose us by all the means of grace we enjoy, to attain that everlasting salvation which thou hast promised, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Teach us, O Lord, so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom: and grant that neither the splendour of any thing that is great, nor the conceit of any thing that is good in us, may any way withdraw our eyes from thee, our chief good, or from looking upon ourselves as sinful dust and ashes; but that we may press forward to the prize of our high calling, with faith and patience, with humility and meekness, with mortification and self-denial, with charity and constant perseverance to the end; that so when we shall depart this life, we may sleep in the Lord, and at the general resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in thy sight, and receive that blessing which thy beloved Son shall then pronounce upon all those that truly love and fear thee.

Charge thy holy providence, O Lord, we humbly beseech thee, with us this night, and by thy great mercy defend us from all the perils and dangers of it. Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities that may assault the body, and from

all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul.

INTERCESSION.

Extend thy goodness, O Lord, to the whole race of mankind. Have mercy upon the ignorant, and them that are out of the way of instruction; and so take from them all hardness of heart and contempt of thy word, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites.

Grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same.

Let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy church; and because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness.

Bless our country and our King. Bless high and low, rich and poor together. May all in their several stations be useful to each other, and serviceable to the public good.

We make our humble supplications to thee for all our benefactors, friends, and relations, and also for our very enemies; let thy fatherly hand be ever over them, and lead them to the knowledge and obedience of thy word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life.

Look with an eye of pity and compassion upon all those who are in any way afflicted or distressed

in mind, body, or estate; give them patience under their sufferings, and in thy due time, a happy issue out of all their afflictions.

THANKSGIVING.

And as we pray unto thee, O God, for ourselves and others, so we desire to bless and praise thy holy name; for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men. We give thee hearty thanks for thy preservation of us during the past day, and the former part of our lives, from innumerable accidents and dangers; for the comforts and conveniences, as well as the necessities of life. But above all, we magnify and adore thy goodness in the redemption of the world, by the death of our Saviour Jesus Christ, both God and man; who humbled himself even to the death of the cross for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and in the shadow of death, that he might exalt us to everlasting life. Teach us to express our thankfulness, by submitting ourselves entirely to his holy will and pleasure, and by studying to serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.

Accept, O Lord, of these our prayers and praises, in and through the mediation of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer, who hath taught us when we pray, to say—Our Father, &c.

Friday Morning.

By the Rev. Mr. Cockin.

O LORD, we desire to habituate ourselves to thy worship. In our closets, in thine house, and when we rear the family altar, may the desires of our hearts, and the expression of our lips be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. May we feel our minds devoutly engaged in thy work. Unite our hearts to fear thy name. Give us the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue. May our devout supplications express the feelings of our minds: preserve us from formality. May we be assisted by thy good Spirit, that our prayers may be offered with simplicity and godly sincerity. Let every part of spiritual duty be acceptable to thee, and profitable to ourselves. Help us to begin this day in thy fear, by recording with grateful hearts the mercies of the last night, and by looking unto thee for thy blessing upon us individually and severally this morning.

Vouchsafe to preserve us this day from every kind of evil, natural, moral, or accidental. Be with us in going out and coming in. Be with us in our way, in our employment, and in the several services of human life. Whatever we do, may we respect thy glory. We desire to engage in nothing but what is agreeable to thy will, and upon which we can ask thy blessing. Give us good success in every thing to which we put our hands. Make our

ways to prosper, for without thee we can do nothing even to our worldly profit.

More especially we desire, O God of our mercies, that thou wouldst keep us this day from every thing sinful. Thou knowest our hearts, that we desire to please thee, by avoiding every thing that would be contrary to thy holiness, and offensive in thy sight. But, alas! we are poor depraved creatures; when we would do good, evil is present with us. Preserve us from ourselves. Let no corruption bring us into bondage. Let no temptation of the heart, or the eye, overcome us. May the grace of God be sufficient for us, to guard us in every time of danger; and may we be helped to escape unhurt by any moral stain. May the fear of God be constantly before our eyes, as a defence, and may the grace of Christ be continually in our hearts to preserve us from all evil.

Blessed be thy name, O God, for all our mercies, that we have got so far on in life, and so well. Hitherto thou hast helped us. We desire to review the way in which thou hast led us so long and so safely, with grateful minds. May the bitter, which at any time thou hast given us to drink, humble our hearts in thy sight, who never afflictest willingly, nor grieveest the children of men. May what has been dark and mysterious in our course, and which thy gracious providence has cleared up, encourage us to cast all our future care upon him who has cared for us. Thou hast never left us hitherto, and may we encourage ourselves for the future in humble hope that thou wilt never leave us

or ours destitute of thy great mercy. Sensibly affect our hearts with a spiritual view of all thy goodness mercifully afforded, that we may return unto thee according to thy manifold favours, which we have received from thy love; continue still to grant us thy blessing. When new trials assail us, may we again hasten to thy throne, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.

Be pleased, O God, to prepare us for every event. We know not what a day may bring forth. Futurity thou hast kindly hid from our eyes. Help us to live by the day. We feel that the evil of the day is sufficient. May we leave the rest with God, believing that he cares for us. Thy wisdom, O Lord, is more than our foresight; do thou kindly direct our course. Thy care is greater than our solicitude; help us to believe that thou carest for us. Never leave nor forsake us. Guide us by thy counsel, and afterwards receive us to glory. Prepare us, we beseech thee, for this blessed place, and when the night of death shall come, may we hail the joyful morning of immortality and eternal happiness, as a release from affliction, as an introduction to blessedness, and as the commencement of all we have sought or wished for here below. All these blessings we humbly ask in his name, who has taught us to say—Our Father, &c.

Friday Evening.

By the Rev. E. Bickersteth.

O THOU who art the God of all the (believing) families of the earth, who didst favourably notice Abraham's commanding his children and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, be thou present with us now, and enable us, by thy Holy Spirit, and through thy Son's intercession, to worship thee in spirit and in truth.

CONFESSION.

We feel that we have sins common to us all, to mention when we come together before thee. We were all born in sin, the children of wrath, and have in common a corrupt nature, and a continual propensity to depart from thee. And O how often have we offended thee, the God of all the earth, by actual transgressions! We have sinned in thought, word, and deed. Gracious Lord, we confess that in the day that is past, by vain thoughts, by idle words, by sinful indulgences we have grieved thy Spirit, and we have incurred thy displeasure. Our only refuge is thy promised mercy in Christ Jesus. We cast ourselves wholly on that mercy: fixing all our hopes on our Saviour's Cross, we confess our guilt, and pray that the blood of Jesus Christ thy Son may cleanse us from all sin.

PETITION.

And give us, we beseech thee, the comfortable assurance that our sins are forgiven. Let thy Spirit itself bear witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. Plentifully impart to us the gift of thy Spirit, that we may bring forth love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, and temperance. Grant that we may so copy the example of our Saviour, that we may be the epistles of Christ, known and read of all men ; and have clear evidence of our own salvation. Teach us so to live that we may glorify thee, who hast bought us with a price of such amazing value as the blood of thine own Son. O that all now kneeling together may indeed obtain mercy in Jesus, be passed from death to life, and love and serve thee unfeignedly. But, O Lord, how cold is our love to thee ; how dead, how dull are our hearts ! Help us really to love thee, to love thee with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength. Shed abroad the love of God in our hearts, by giving us the Holy Ghost ; and may we be taught of God to love one another. Be thou present with us in our more retired devotions ; praying to our Father which is in secret, may we find his presence and blessing there.

INTERCESSION.

Bless, O Lord, all that are near and dear to us.

Many beloved relations and friends are now absent from us, but thou art with them, and all their wants are known to thee. Give them thy grace; ever guide them here by thy counsel, and may none of them be wanting in thy heavenly kingdom. We pray for the King, and all in authority; Lord, may their counsels be ordered by thee. Give, we beseech thee, to all the ministers of Jesus Christ every where true knowledge and understanding of thy word; and may they set it forth in their lives accordingly. Lord, call forth and send out many faithful labourers to the work of the ministry, and to the edifying of the body of Christ. Bring it to pass that the distant isles shall wait on thee, and the Gentiles come to thy light. Bless every society established for benefitting the bodies and souls of men, and let thy glory be abundantly promoted by them.

THANKSGIVING.

Thanks be unto thee, Holy God, for all thy goodness towards us. How multiplied are thy mercies every day. How excellent is thy lovingkindness. We bless thee for all thy long suffering and forbearance towards us. We thank thee for the infinite mercy of redeeming love. We bless thee for the knowledge of thy salvation, and for the light of thy truth; for protection from every danger during the night, and provision for all our wants by day. Thou hast spread our table with food, and thou givest us every needful good.

Accept these our prayers and our praises, which

we offer up in the name, and through Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Saturday Morning.

By the Rev. T. Russell, A. M.

Most merciful and gracious God, who art the Father of all the families of the earth; we humbly present ourselves at thy footstool to offer up to thee our prayers and supplications with thanksgivings.

We have reason not only to adore thy glorious and boundless perfections, but to praise thy great and holy name, for thy goodness to us thine unworthy and sinful creatures. What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him. Thou preservest us from day to day; and amidst all our difficulties, dangers, and trials, having obtained help of thee, we continue to this hour. On the past night we commended ourselves to thy care, O thou watchful shepherd and guardian of thy flock; we laid ourselves down and slept in peace and safety, because thou sustainedst us. We bless thee for bringing us to behold the light of this day, with all the circumstances of mercy with which it is attended; for all those personal and domestic comforts and enjoyments which are constantly conferred upon us. We adore and praise thee, O Lord, for that measure of health and strength we possess, for the continuance of the possession of our rational

faculties, for the bounties of thy kind providence with which we are surrounded ; for the salutary instructions and precious promises of thy word, for this renewed opportunity of drawing near to thy mercy seat, and for the cheering and animating prospects which thou art ever opening to our view, of thy presence and support in this world, and of everlasting glory in that which is to come.

We confess, O Lord, that we are not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of the truth thou hast shewed to thy servants. We are deeply conscious of manifold and aggravated transgressions against thee. We have disobeyed thy laws, which are holy, just, and good ; we have been forgetful of thy favours and of our obligations to thee, we have often slighted and abused the richest discoveries of thy grace in the Gospel of thy Son ; we have provoked thee to anger, to cause thy Spirit entirely to depart from us, and to bring down thy wrath upon our guilty heads. It is indeed of thy great mercies that we are not consumed, and because thy compassions fail not.

(O Lord, we beseech thee not to enter into judgment with thy servants. Be merciful unto us, and pardon our iniquities for they are very great. O let our cry come up before thee. Spare us, good Lord. Suffer us to plead with thee thine own declarations and promises. Thou hast exhorted and encouraged us to take with us words, and turn to the Lord, to say unto thee, take away all iniquity and receive us graciously. We rejoice that there is mercy with

thee that thou mayest be feared, and with thee our God there is plenteous redemption.

Thou hast exhibited thy love to mankind in the most astonishing manner, in the gift of thy only begotten Son, to be the Saviour of the lost and miserable; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. In his sufferings and work, through his person and death, thou hast removed every obstacle to the free exercise of thy boundless compassion, thou remainest just whilst thou art the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. In his name we draw near unto thee supplicating pardon, reconciliation, and peace. He is the way, the truth, and the life; our only, but all-sufficient advocate with the Father who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and is able to save all those that come unto God by him. For his sake communicate the blessings of thy grace to our souls. Enable us to look up to thee as our Father in him. May we resign ourselves wholly to thy will, and have the blessedness of thy chosen, and rejoice with thine inheritance.

Grant unto us the promised aids of thy Holy Spirit, according to our various circumstances and wants. Enlighten our minds, sanctify our hearts, raise our affections towards heavenly objects; and may our walk and conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. Prepare us for the proper discharge of the duties which lie before us this day. Be with us in our going out and in our coming in. Keep us in thy fear and love all the day long.

Enable us to improve the talents entrusted to our care, to thy glory, and to the benefit of the souls and bodies of our fellow creatures. May we feel for the afflicted and distressed, and do good to all men as we have opportunity, and especially to them who are of the household of faith.

Keep us from the snares and temptations of Satan, and the world, and from the influence of the corruptions of our own minds. May we hide thy word in our hearts, that we sin not against thee. Let an abiding sense of thy presence pervade our minds, and regulate all our thoughts, words, and actions. May we never forget that thou, O Lord, seest us, and wilt bring us into judgment.

Sanctify to us all the dispensations of thy providence, in the course of our pilgrimage through life, that our seasons of prosperity and adversity, of health and sickness, of pleasure and grief, may mutually promote our spiritual and eternal interest. Prepare us for our departure from this world, whenever thou shalt see fit in thine infinite wisdom and good pleasure to call us hence. When our heart and flesh shall fail, be thou the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever. Hear us, we beseech thee, O Lord, for all whom duty and affection lead us to pray, and make intercession at thy throne. Bless our relations and friends with those things which thou knowest are best for them. If we have enemies, forgive them; remove all enmity from our bosoms, and may we, as much as in us lies, live peaceably with all men.

Mercifully regard our sovereign the King, (the

Queen,) and all the royal family; and pour down upon them the choicest blessings of thy grace.

Assist the ministers of the Gospel of every name and denomination in our own country, and throughout the world, in the affectionate faithful discharge of the duties of their profession. May the word of God run, have free course, and be glorified. Let the Gospel be preached to all nations, for the obedience of faith: and the happy period soon arrive when all the earth shall be full of the knowledge and glory of the Lord; when the sun of righteousness shall expand his healing wings over all the abodes of mankind, and both Jew and Gentile in every land shall be subdued by his grace, and join to celebrate his praise as the Redeemer and Lord of all. For him, we again devoutly bless thee, as thy unspeakable gift, and finally pray that we may be found in him, living and dying, and for ever. *Amen.*

Saturday Evening.

By the Rev. Dr. Hawker.

GREAT and glorious Lord of heaven and earth: behold thy poor creatures of the dust approaching thy divine presence, to present our evening sacrifice of thanksgiving for the mercies of the day past, and the whole of our lives; and to implore thy protection through the night. We humbly desire to call

upon thee, thou Almighty Lord, through the atoning merits and intercession of Jesus. We adore thee for thy great goodness, manifested to us, in that we yet live monuments of thy long-suffering and forbearance, and are still permitted to call upon thy name. Most justly might we have been cut off from the land of the living for our manifold transgressions, had thy ways been as our ways, and thy thoughts like our thoughts; and long since have been past the power of offering any prayers to thy divine majesty: but thou art a God of mercy, therefore thy grace is still continued towards us. Oh that we may now find grace in thy sight! We desire, with the lowest prostration of soul and body, to confess our manifold offences before thee, and to smite upon our breasts, humbly imploring that thou wouldst be merciful to us miserable sinners.

(Had we only the sins and errors of the past day to answer for, yet even this day's account would make us stand condemned before thee. But our transgressions have been multiplied from our childhood to this hour. We have sinned against the clearest knowledge of thy will, often in the midst of the tenderest expressions of thy mercy; against all thy inviting promises, thy awful warnings, and fatherly visitations; against the powerful corrections of thy Holy Spirit, and all the mercies provided for us in the blood of Christ. Lord, we are unworthy to come before thee; and were it not that even a sense of our sins can only come from the blessed teachings of thy Holy Spirit, we should not have the confidence any more to pray unto God.)

(But when we look through the channel of grace and mercy opened to sinners, in the atonement and righteousness of Christ, we are encouraged to draw nigh, and to plead this before thee, as the means of acceptance.)

O sprinkle our consciences with that blood of cleansing which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; clothe our souls with that robe of righteousness which is found only in the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ our Lord; and let our whole hope and dependance be in him, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption!

Accompany thy pardoning mercy with thy sanctifying grace. And as our Lord Jesus Christ died for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh, enable us to die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness. Help us, O Lord, thou God of power and might, to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness.

O give us a new heart, and renew a right spirit within us! Wean our souls from the vanities, and honours, and from all the enjoyments of flesh and appetite, in this transitory state of things, and make us hunger and thirst after righteousness, until we wake up after thy likeness, to be fully satisfied with it.

(Impress us continually with that great truth, that the gaining of the whole world would be but a miserable recompence for the loss of the soul. And oh! let that solemn account we must all ere long

give before the judgment seat of Christ, so influence all our thoughts, and words, and actions, that when the moment shall come, that Christ shall appear to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all that believe, we may be able to cry out with holy rapture—Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation!)

.. We humbly commit ourselves, our friends, our relations, our neighbours, and all that call upon the name of the Lord, to thy merciful protection this night. The darkness is no darkness with thee, but the night is as clear as the day. Defend, we beseech thee, our persons, our dwellings, and our property from all danger. Refresh us with such sleep, that the wearied limbs of the body may be so comforted and prepared to act with the vigour of the mind, that when the morning shall again dawn upon us, together with opening the eyes of the body to the light of a new day, we may open the eyes of the soul to the renewed light of thy grace. Or, if it be thy blessed will, that our sleep may be the sleep of death, let our souls be found among those who sleep in Jesus, and may all thy providences be sanctified with thy blessing and thy grace, that if we live we may live to the Lord, and if we die we may die to the Lord, so that living or dying we may be the Lord's.

After the many supplications we have presumed to make for the mercies we want, let a sense of the many we enjoy, make us ever grateful for those already received. We bow with thankfulness for the blessings of ease and health, which thou hast been

pleased to give us, for the comforts of the day past, and for the many promises bestowed upon us through life; but above all these mercies, which, great and undeserved as they are, are yet but temporal; we wish to express still more devout thanksgiving for those that are eternal; for all the wonders of thy grace; that such a redemption is provided for fallen man, in the death of the Son of God. And O the abundant goodness manifested to our souls! that while so many millions are born, and live, and die, in ignorance of this unspeakable gift of heaven, thou hast revealed unto us this knowledge of thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Accept all that sinful creatures can offer of acknowledgement, and let our prayers, both of supplication and thanksgiving, come up before the throne of thy grace, through the sole merits and intercession of Jesus Christ.

Our Father, &c.

THIRD WEEK.

Lord's Day Morning.

O LORD our God, thou art good, and doest good to us ; and thy mercies are over all thy works. All thy works praise thee, and thy saints bless thee—Do thou now assist us by thy Holy Spirit, to offer unto thee our morning sacrifice, both of prayer and of praise—thou knowest, O Lord, that though by thy grace we would, yet of ourselves we cannot pray aright—

Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and canst not look on sin without infinite abhorrence. Yet thou hast invited sinners to come unto thee through the mediation of thy Son—He is able to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto thee through him—Lord, look upon us in mercy, and seal a sense of thy pardoning love on our souls—Show us a token for good this day—Go with us to thy house—Sanctify to us thy sabbaths—May we be sanctified through thy truth—Exalt our thoughts, and render spiritual our affections—Lord, help thy ministering servants to speak right things, and leave them not to darken counsel by words without knowledge—O that while we sit at their feet for instruction, they may sit at thine—Lord clothe thy word with power ; and let the sweet influences of thy Holy

Spirit attend a faithfully dispensed Gospel, to make glad our hearts with the discoveries of thy grace.

Melt down the obdurate; alarm the careless; and awaken every sleeping conscience; may we also hear the Gospel, that our souls may live upon its holy and sanctifying truths—O Lord, search our hearts—Cleanse us, we beseech thee, from our secret sins. Purify our hearts, and make us all glorious within—Let Christ dwell in our hearts by faith—And being rooted and grounded in love, may we be enabled, with all saints, to comprehend the length, and breadth, and depth, and heighth, and know experimentally the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God.—With these rich blessings, bless we pray thee our absent friends—and let their hearts, as well as ours, be captivated by thy love—May all our hearts be engaged in, and delighted with thy ways.—May we always be glad when they say unto us, Let us go into the house of the Lord.—And having tasted that thou art gracious, and that Christ is precious, may we earnestly desire that others may enjoy the same mercies.

Have compassion, gracious Lord, on those who are saying, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways—who spend the hours of the sabbath in the business, or pleasures of this world—May they be born again and become new creatures in Jesus Christ, that they also may be taught to call the sabbath a delight.————

Hear, gracious God, our prayers, and accept our praises, for Jesus' sake alone, who taught us to call thee our Father, &c.

Lord's Day Evening.

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of lights, and fountain of all grace and goodness ; we praise thee for the privilege thou hast given us in thy sabbath, and in thy sanctuary—Grant us thy Holy Spirit, to enable us inwardly to digest thy word.—Open our eyes, O Lord, that we may see the wondrous things of thy law ; and cause our hearts to feel an interest therein—May we receive thy word not only in the light, but in the love thereof—O that through thy grace the words we have this day heard with our outward ears, may be so inwardly grafted in all our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruits of good living to the praise of thy name.—

We have reason to lament our past unfruitfulness in thy ways—Thou hast given us many talents, but we have been unfaithful stewards—Much of our time has been mispent—We have been backward to the duties of thy worship, and very dead and formal in them.—

Pardon our short comings, and the iniquities of our holy things—Lord wash away our sins in the blood of Christ—We fly to his cross as our security. renouncing all confidence in any thing besides Him, who is the Lord our righteousness.—

And, Lord, engage us not only to accept of him as our prophet to teach us, and as our priest to atone for us ; but also as our king to reign in and rule over us, all the days of our lives.—Do thou possess the throne of our hearts.—By thy Spirit subdue all

our lusts, that they may rule over us no more—Do thou incline our wills, and animate our souls by thy love, that we may never count thy commandments grievous, but may esteem it our highest pleasure and dignity, as well as our greatest duty to serve and obey thee—Peculiarly regard, O God, this household—Let the principle of godly love be diffused abroad in every heart.

Prosper the intended occupations of our hands in the ensuing week, and ever let us be restrained from all ungodly deeds—Help us to sanctify the Lord God in our hearts—Subdue our passions; regulate our affections; and let our conversation be in heaven—Under all our crosses give us patience, and enable us unto all long-suffering with joyfulness—Let the blessing be ever upon thy people.

Build up thy church in faith, holiness, and comfort, unto eternal salvation—Have compassion on a benighted world—let thy ways be known upon earth; thy saving health among all nations.

May thy special grace protect the King. Establish his throne in righteousness—Give wisdom to his counsellors, and dutiful submission to the subjects of his dominions.—Bless all the royal family—Endue them with thy Holy Spirit; enrich them with thy heavenly grace; prosper them with all happiness; and bring them to thy heavenly kingdom—Hear, accept, and answer us, for the sake of him in whose name we pray :—Our Father, &c.

Monday Morning.

O LORD, the everlasting God, who faintest not, neither art weary, but who givest power to the faint. We bless thee that thou hast refreshed our bodies as well as our souls. Thou hast caused us to awake this morning, and behold our sleep hath been sweet unto us.—What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards us? Do thou inspire our hearts with unfeigned love and gratitude to thee for thy continual preservation of us. Our goodness cannot extend unto thee, nor can our praises profit thee.—

But, O Lord, we admire thy wisdom and goodness in appointing the exercise of prayer, as the means by which we should obtain blessings from thee, and in requiring our thanksgiving, as our acknowledgements of thy mercies, and the expressions of our gratitude. Send down the Holy Spirit upon us who are this morning prostrate at thy feet. May he, according to thy word, come and teach us all things. May our understandings be filled with the knowledge of thee. Fill our hearts with thy love, and our minds with thy peace. Increase in all the powers and capacities of our souls, that purity and holiness which are the evidence and ornament of every other grace.

O do thou sanctify us throughout, in spirit, soul, and body. May we be enabled through the spirit to mortify sin, and to resist Satan, by a steadfast exercise of faith in thy great and precious promises.

May we be continually looking unto Jesus, and living upon his fulness. In his righteousness may we rejoice all the day long. Let our minds be kept in perfect peace by believing the record which thou hast given us, concerning the efficacy of his blood to cleanse us from all sin, and the all-sufficiency of his grace to sanctify our souls.—We would live on thy word, which we have heard by the mouth of thy servant on the past sabbath. And we pray that it may be kept in the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts. Let every grace which thy Spirit hath implanted within us, be nourished and invigorated thereby.

Shed abroad the love of Christ in each of our hearts, by the Holy Spirit given unto us. May we think of his wonderful love to us poor wretched sinners, till we are filled with delightful astonishment at the fulness and freeness thereof. May this consideration constrain us to love him in return—to delight in his service—to be zealous for his glory—and to long to dwell with him above.

Lord what shall we render; what wilt thou have us to do;—grant we may walk before thee in all well-pleasing. Let us have free access to thee and enjoy real communion with thee. And as thine eyes are continually upon us, may our eyes be up to thee throughout the day on which we are now entering. O be present with us, to comfort, and to keep us, we beseech thee.—

Bless all thy people.—Be with all thy tempted, tried, and afflicted children. Let their sorrowful sighings come up before thee—Shine forth in the

free and rich displays of thy love, mercy, and tender compassion.—Bless all thy ministering servants. Follow their labours with thy divine influences on the souls of men—Let thy word run very swiftly, that the name of the Lord Jesus may be known and glorified, and God in him, from the rising of the sun even to the place of its going down.—Now, Lord, we commit ourselves and all thy people to thy care. Thou, Lord, art the keeper of thy people, thou art their shade upon their right hand. Thou wilt not suffer the sun to smite them by day, nor the moon by night. Thou, Lord, wilt preserve them from all evil, because they put their trust in thee. The Lord shall preserve our going out, and our coming in, from this time forth, even for evermore. *Amen.*

Monday Evening.

O THOU, who art the hope of Israel and the Saviour thereof! as the monuments of thy mercy and the objects of thy preserving care, we are again assembled at the footstool of thy throne.—

Thou art daily loading us with thy benefits, both temporal and spiritual; and it is our privilege as well as our duty to present our unfeigned thanks to thee; for while we acknowledge thy past mercies, new favours are conferred upon us. Thou art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon thee.—Lord, we find that we every day need the exercise of thy mercy towards us, for

in many things we all offend. Our lives are sinful, and our heart much more so.—

We take shame to ourselves, not only for outward violations of thy laws. but for our secret faults. Our inward depravity; our pride and unbelief, our mistrust of thy word and providence, our covetousness and love of the world, our impatience under thy rebukes. Lord, thou knowest our foolishness, and our sins are not hid from thee.—Our fellow creatures can only look on the outward appearance; but thou lookest on the heart.—

But behold now, O God! our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. Him hast thou highly exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins.—Grant us these great blessings we beseech thee for his sake. We know both from thy word and our own experience that there is no returning to thee, nor any coming to thee when we have returned, but through him. We hope for acceptance with thee, and for the liberty of access to thee, through him alone.—(And, O Lord our God, with thee is the fountain of life. Thou art the source of all our peace, comfort, and happiness, both in time and in eternity. When we can look up in the exercise of faith and holy confidence to thee, what rest and support do we enjoy? and what victory over our inward foes do we obtain! for thou art the true source of every good we need; Thou art the home of our immortal spirits! Thou hast made them for thyself; and we cannot but be miserable without thee.) O let us be continually coming to thee by faith and prayer, till we come to

dwell with thee, and are continually praising thee. Let nothing interrupt our communion with thee. Be thou our habitation whereunto we may continually resort. May we trust in thee at all times, in all circumstances, and for all things: and pour out our hearts before thee. In every thing, by prayer supplication with thanksgiving, may our request be made known unto God, and may thy peace which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. To whom, with thyself, and the Holy Spirit, be glory and praise, throughout all ages, and world without end. *Amen.*

Tuesday Morning.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto thy name, O Lord, and to show forth thy praises, O thou Most High. Morning and evening to speak of thy faithfulness, and to talk of thy wonderful works. Thou hast given us abundant reason to utter the memory of thy great goodness; and we would embrace with cheerfulness every opportunity of engaging in thy service. It is meet, right, and our bounden duty, to bring our humble and grateful acknowledgements to thee. We are the creatures of thy power, and the objects of thy providential care.

Thou art kind even to the unthankful; for thou makest thy sun to rise on the evil, as well as the good, and sendest rain on the just and on the unjust.

Yea, thou art good to all, and thy tender mercies are over all thy works.

But, O God, thou art peculiarly kind to thy children, and thou knowest them that trust in thee. How great is thy goodness, O Lord, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men! Many are the instances of thy loving-kindness toward us. If we would count them up, they are more than can be numbered.—How sweet and wonderful to recount any of the particular instances of thy patience with us, and of thy bounty towards us.—Thou hast kept, and fed us all our life unto this day. Having obtained help at thine hands, we are permitted to present ourselves and our supplications before thee this morning. Thou hast recruited our bodies and refreshed our spirits by the comfortable rest of another night. We would therefore give thee thanks for thus continuing to us our lives, and thy mercies. O grant us a due sense of all thy goodness and lovingkindness, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful. Lord, let not all this goodness and forbearance be lost upon us; but, O let our souls melt, and flow out in gratitude and affection towards thee, and towards all our fellow creatures for thy sake. Send down thy Holy Spirit to dwell more abundantly in our hearts, to excite us to the exercise of faith, love, and holy warmth in thy ways. Make us stedfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. And as we have time and opportunity, we

would do good unto all men, but especially unto them that are of the household of faith. Lord, increase in our hearts that love and charity which will make us kindly affectioned to all, and heartily desirous of their happiness.

And may we every day be growing in all the graces of humility, temperance, chastity, self-denial, diligence, and christian watchfulness. While we are in a disordered world, and necessarily exposed to diversified trials, help us in patience to possess our souls; yea, enable us unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness. O that we may glorify the Lord in the fires by imitating the example of the passive, as well as the active obedience of our Redeemer. Whatever may be the cause or whoever may be the instrument of our grief, may we never lose sight of thy over-ruling agency, but say, with the meek and lowly Jesus, "the cup which my father giveth me, shall I not drink it?"

But, Lord, without thee we can do nothing as we ought. We can only serve thee in thine own strength. May thy grace be felt sufficient for us, and thy strength be made perfect in our weakness.

We pray for the sick and afflicted. O despise not the prisoners of thy providence. Hear their groans, and let their sighing come up before thee. Be graciously present with those who are detained from thine house, and from the public means of instruction. Help them to worship thee in their own. May thy testimonies be their song in the house of their pilgrimage. Fill them with all joy and peace in believing, that when thou hast tried them, they

shall come forth as gold; and that they shall yet praise thee, who art the health of their countenance and their God.

Let thy church flourish. Peace be within her walls, and prosperity within her palaces. May thy word run very swiftly, and great may the company be who publish it. Make bare thine arm and exert thy power, that all the ends of the earth may remember themselves, and turn unto the Lord.—

O give thy Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Let the joyful sound of the Gospel be heard where Christ is not yet named. That which has not been told them may they see, and that which they have not heard, may they consider. Let the whole earth become thy temple, and be filled with thy glory. Let the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in, and let all Israel be saved. Do good to us in these nations. Let peace and truth prevail in our day, and be preserved to those that shall come after us.

Make our King and rulers public blessings, both in our civil and sacred concerns. Frustrate the designs of those who are enemies to the Protestant succession and religion. Enlighten the ignorant, and turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. Hear us, O Lord, and grant us every needful blessing, whether personal or relative; for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever. *Amen.*

Tuesday Evening.

O THOU that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. All nations whom thou hast made shall come, and worship before thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name: for thou art great, and doest wonderful things, thou art God alone. Among the gods there is none like unto thee, neither are there any works like unto thy works. Thou humblest thyself to behold the things that are done in heaven and earth. —Teach us to approach thee with that reverence which becometh thy creatures, and with that humility which becometh such as have sinned against heaven and in thy sight. Make us sensible that we are unworthy of thy notice; having broken thy commandments, lost thine image, and forfeited thy favour. O most Holy Lord God! we have not only wandered from thee while in the darkness and depravity of our natural state: but we have often rebelled against the light of thy Spirit, and the truth of thy word, against the admonitions of thy providence, and the remonstrances of our own consciences. For all this, we confess, that in thy righteous and holy displeasure, thou mightest have cast us away from thy gracious presence, and have taken thy Spirit from us; thus giving us up to our own heart's lust, and to a reprobate mind. But, notwithstanding our unfaithfulness, thou hast still remembered thy covenant engagements, and hast stirred up our hearts afresh to seek thy face, and to implore thy favour and mercy.

We now come in the name of thy Son, trusting in

his merits and mediation, both for access to thee, and acceptance with thee. The Lord be merciful unto us for his sake ; and bestow upon us that godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of.—O help us ever to come to thee as poor, guilty, helpless sinners, accepting of, and trusting in, the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is exhibited in the Gospel for our own salvation. May we more and more admire the wonderful displays of thy love and grace in him. When no eye pitied, when no hand but thine could save us ; then thou didst graciously visit and redeem us. Herein is love, not that we loved thee, but thou hast loved us, and sent thy Son, to be the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for all who shall believe on him, to the end of the world. He obeyed thy law and made it honourable. He hath glorified thee in his humiliation, life, and obedience on the earth ; and thou hast exalted him, and seated him at thy right hand. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. O that we may know that we were given to him as our head and Saviour, by being enabled to give up ourselves to him, and by becoming new creatures in him. May we admire his character, and long for his likeness, and the enjoyment of his love. O Lord, warm our hearts with lively and exalted views of thy grace.—Show us thy covenant love, and satisfy our souls with thy mercy, that we may rejoice therein with joy unspeakable and full of glory. With such thoughts and such delightful experience, may we lie down this night, and rise up

in the morning. And O grant, that when we shall close our eyes in death, we may know in whom we have believed; and rejoice in the blessed hope and prospect of a glorious resurrection morn, when we shall awake to sleep no more. Be thou about our beds this night. Give thine angels charge concerning us. In our waking moments, help us to meditate on thee in the night watches.

To thy tender care and mercy, we now commend our souls and bodies, our friends and relations, and all thy people. O refresh our bodies with comfortable sleep, and our minds with thy heavenly visitations. Abide with us this night, and keep us. The Lord make his face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us, and give us peace for Jesus Christ sake. Our Father, &c.

Wednesday Morning.

O THOU everywhere present, and all-seeing God ! Thou art about our paths, and art acquainted with all our ways. All our sins and all our wants are known to thee. That we may be always sensible of our unworthiness, and also of our entire dependance on thy mercy and grace, thou requirest us to confess our guilt, and to spread our wants before thee. O Lord, we cannot understand our errors, we know not how great sinners we are in thy holy sight ; thy laws

are so pure and good, and our hearts so vile and sinful, that we know not how often we offend.—Lord have mercy upon us, and cleanse us from our known and unknown faults. Enter not into judgment with thy servants, for in thy sight shall no man be justified.—O impart to our souls a sense of thy pardoning love, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Grant unto each member of this household the light and guidance of thy Holy Spirit. Help us to see and understand the great and important things which we read in thy word. O that parents, and children, and servants, may be lead into all truth, that is needful for us to know. Show us the mysteries of thy kingdom; and may that kingdom come into our hearts, which consists in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.—May we always see our need of Christ, that we may delight to receive him as our prophet, to depend on him as our atoning priest, and to obey him as our sovereign king. We would acknowledge thy daily mercies, O give us with them a thankful heart—We would praise thee for preserving mercy through the past night—Thou hast been about our beds to preserve us this night. Lord, thou art always near to us, O keep us in holy nearness to thee, and let us never depart from thy presence.—Provide, O gracious Lord, for our necessities by thy blessing upon our endeavours.—Regard all our absent friends—May our spirits meet before thy throne: and may our prayers united bring down blessings on every head—Deal with us as thou seest good.—May

our prayers be answered, and our praises be accepted, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son and our Saviour. *Amen.*

Wednesday Evening.

O THOU glorious majesty of heaven and earth : we who are dust and ashes, have taken upon us to speak unto thee—May thy Spirit help our infirmities ; for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness :—Our sins are multiplied over our heads, so that, were it not for the revelation of thy mercy, we dare not look up to thee.—Never did a sinful household need more than we do, the exercise of thy mercy in Jesus Christ. Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed—Deal with us according to his merits, and not according to our deserts.—Let his precious blood be for our cleansing, and his spotless righteousness, for our covering in thy sight—Give us to approach by the door of access unto thee, the infinitely holy Lord God !—Reveal thyself to our hearts, and make us glad with the joys of thy salvation. O Lord, quicken thou us, for our souls cleave unto the dust.—Give us the spirit of grace and supplication. That we may be enabled to trust in thee at all times, and to pour out our hearts before thee.—We would mourn over our transgressions against thee,

and our manifold backslidings from thee; our treacherous hearts which are so prone to turn aside.—O that we could but hate our sins as they are hateful to thee, and hurtful to us!—Give us thy promised grace and strength, to stand against the power of sin and the malice of Satan.—Thy power alone can set us free from the besetting and enslaving power of sin. Thy grace is sufficient for us—O let thy strength be made perfect in our weakness.—O look thou upon us—cause thy face to shine upon us. Give *us* to know that we are reconciled unto thee, and that the blood of Jesus Christ thy Son cleanseth *us* from all sin. Do thou fix us on him as the rock of our salvation.—We would pray, as thou hast guided us through the past day, that thou wouldest take us under thy care this night—Be near to us. Let us enjoy a comfortable sense of thy presence while we wake, and then fall asleep as in thine arms. Bless with us all thy people—Regard our dear relatives, refresh their spirits with the tokens of thy love. Be as the dew unto them. Let them revive as the corn. Let them grow as the vine, and cast forth their roots as Lebanon—Accept our thanks for every instance of thy past goodness—Were we to declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered—We will sing of thy power, yea we will sing aloud of thy mercies in the morning, for thou hast been our refuge. Unto thee, O Lord, will we sing, for thou art our defence, and the God of our mercies. To whom be glory and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thursday Morning.

O LORD God of our Salvation, unto thee do we lift up our souls. Blessed be thy holy name, thou hast been attentive unto the voice of our evening supplications. Thou hast not turned a deaf ear to our prayer, nor turned away thy mercy from us—Thou hast kept us in safety, and permitted us to enter on a new day—What shall we render unto thee? Because thou hast been our help, therefore under the shadow of thy wings will we rejoice. O that thy goodness may excite our gratitude, and awaken our songs of praise, to the God of our lives, and the author of all our mercies. Thy favours are especially great in the view of our unworthiness—We confess and acknowledge that our origin is dust. We are guilty and polluted creatures.—Children of apostate parents. The miserable descendants of a fallen head. In ourselves we are vile in thy holy sight. Make, and keep us so in our own.—Give us thy Holy Spirit that he may teach us more and more the exceeding sinfulness of sin.—And, while a sense of our sinfulness makes us humble and penitent, and drives us to Christ for pardon and salvation, may it also influence us to seek to him for strength and grace against it.—Lord, we would be delivered from the power as well as from the punishment of sin. Sin is the hell from which we beseech thee to deliver us. We would go forth this day in thy strength to fight and strive against sin.—Thou seest

how many there be that fight against us.—Thou knowest to how many dangers we are daily exposed. O that when the enemy cometh in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord may lift his standard against him.—Let not the smiles, nor the frowns of the world cause us to make shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience. But help us to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. O make us strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus: strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. We are insufficient to think any thing as of ourselves; our sufficiency is in him; and without him we can do nothing.—Lord grant, that while we do not presume in our own strength, we may not despair of doing all things through Christ strengthening us—Help us to keep our hearts with all diligence, knowing, that from thence are the issues of life. Save us from every vain, impure, and sinful imagination;—from every unruly passion and inordinate affection; and graciously assist us to set a constant watch at the door of our lips, and to take heed that we offend not with our tongue—Prepare us for all the occurrences of the day. May we perceive thy hand in every comfort, as well as in every cross.—Help us to feel and sympathize with others in their sufferings, and do thou comfort such as are cast down—Let thy blessing be upon every member of this family—Assist us in the faithful discharge of our respective duties, and make us mutual blessings to each other. Grant these our humble requests, with every needful blessing for Jesus Christ's sake, to whom with thyself

and the Holy Spirit, be all glory and praise for ever. *Amen.*

Thursday Evening.

O THOU Author of all being, and source of all blessedness! we would again lift up our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help; our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth—It is our privilege, as well as our duty to draw near to God. They that are far from thee shall perish. For with thee is the fountain of life—All our sorrows have been produced by our sinful departures from thee, and our transgressions against thy holy laws. And all our comforts are derived from our union to, and communion with, thee.—We bless thee for a new and living way to thee by the blood of Jesus, who was once offered for sins, the just for the unjust to bring us to God.—Through him we have access by one spirit unto thee our heavenly Father. O Lord, clothe us with humility, and help us to present to thee a broken heart and a contrite spirit, which thou wilt not despise.—We have no works nor worthiness to excite thy regard.—If ever we are saved, it must be by thy free mercy, and according to thine own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.—We now come to thee in the name of him who loved us, and gave himself for us; who died for our sins, and who now lives to make intercession

for us.—Grant unto us this evening a comfortable sense of interest in all that Jesus thy Son has done and suffered, in behalf of his church and people. May we know that we have redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace.—Fill us, O thou God of hope, with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope through the influences of the Holy Spirit—Favour us with the favour which thou bearest towards thy people. O visit us with thy salvation.—And shed abroad thy love in all our hearts, that perceiving thy love towards us, we may be constrained thereby to love thee.—May thy law be our delight: let it be our meat and drink to do thy will, O our God. We know that thy laws are all holy, and just, and good. They are all founded in a regard to our good, as well as to thine own glory.—O engage our hearts to run in the way of thy commandments—May we always realize thy presence, and believe that thine eye is upon us—Assist us to bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ—Enable us to bear with firmness, and yet with filial submission, the various trials of life, that the peaceable fruits of righteousness may be produced in us thereby. May we glorify the Lord in the fires, so that every trouble may afford us an opportunity to prove the truth of thy promise, the tenderness of thy care, and the supports of thy grace.—Lord, let thine arm support us, and nothing shall overwhelm us. Nothing can make us miserable while the light of thy countenance is enjoyed by us.—We desire to acknowledge thee in all the dispen-

sations of thy providence, whether pleasing or painful. Thou knowest what is best for us, and most calculated to promote our eternal welfare—O ! that when we are in darkness and have no light, we may trust in the Lord, and stay on our God—Now, Lord, we would commit ourselves again to thy keeping.—Accept our thanks for health and safety through the past day.—Graciously continue unto us thy mercies, and bring us in safety to the light of another day, that we may arise and praise thy holy name. Hear and answer us, accept and bless us, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Friday Morning.

Most glorious and ever blessed God ! By thy mercies we are spared to renew this morning the consecration of ourselves to thy service. Thou hast awakened our bodies from sleep ; do thou awaken our souls also, to a lively and grateful sense of thy goodness.—We would praise thee that no evil has befallen us this night, neither any plague come nigh our dwelling—We laid ourselves down in peace, and slept ; for thou Lord madest us to dwell in safety. As the living monuments of thy goodness, we would present ourselves before thee, together with our morning sacrifice of grateful praise.—Because thou hast been our help, therefore under the shadow of thy wings will we rejoice—O our God, we praise thee for the displays of thy goodness, and

the bounties of thy providence ; but above all, we bless thee for the exceeding riches of thy grace in thy kindness towards us by Christ Jesus. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift, and for the clear and unvailed revelation of him in the glorious Gospel. Here we behold the dignity of his person, the perfection of his sacrifice, and the prevalency of his intercession. O how are thy perfections displayed, harmonized, and glorified in his mediation, work, and sufferings ! In him, mercy and justice mingle their beams, and shine forth in all their beauties, to the admiration of adoring angels ! And while angels surround the throne of thy glory, and contemplate thy infinite perfections, we are permitted to approach the throne of thy grace, and encouraged to rejoice in thy mercy and love, in Christ Jesus our Lord.—For his sake be gracious unto us now. Shine upon our hearts. Show us thy mercy, and grant us a comfortable sense of our interest in thy great salvation.—O thou God of truth, remember thy word unto thy servants, upon which thou hast caused us to hope. Grant us thy peace.—Maintain by thy presence in our souls, that true joy, which is the foretaste of heaven—and, in order that we may cease to desire the pleasures of sin, shed abroad thy love in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit given unto us.—Impress us with a deep sense of that high and holy relation we bear to thee, as thy adopted children by faith in Jesus Christ. For if children, then heirs ; heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ—O that we may indeed be followers of God as *dear children* : and walk in love

as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not once be named among us, as becometh saints: neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. May we ever remember, that we are not our own, but bought with a price, even the precious blood of thy dear Son; that we may henceforth consecrate all our faculties, powers, and possessions, our time, and our substance, our souls and our bodies to thy service and glory.

Bless the nation to which we belong—bless high and low, rich and poor together. Be with every faithful minister of thy truth; especially thy servant on whom we attend—Prosper every useful institution—May many run to and fro, and knowledge be increased—Let thy glorious name be known from the rising of the sun, even to the place of the going down thereof. Yea, let the whole earth be filled with thy glory. *Amen and Amen.*

Friday Evening.

O God, thou art very great! Thy greatness is unsearchable! Thou hast set thy glory above the heavens; and thy name is excellent in all the earth.—We feel ourselves, in thy presence, to be nothing; less than nothing and vanity. We are not only insignificant as creatures, but also mean and vile as

guilty transgressors of thy holy laws. We have not only forfeited thy favour, but also incurred thy righteous displeasure.—When we reflect upon the awful glories of thy character, and the sinful depravity of our own, we are ashamed, yea, even confounded before thee. Could we remember our manifold sins against thee with all their attendant aggravations, our hearts would tremble within us; and our fear of thy displeasure would drive us from thy presence to seek a refuge from thy terrible frown!—But, O God, there is mercy with thee, that thou mayest be served, and loved, and trusted.—Lord, produce in us that sensibility of soul which will lead us to feel our vileness, to lament our guilt, and to cast ourselves at the footstool of thy mercy, abhorring ourselves, and repenting in dust and ashes before thee! And do thou, O God of grace, give us that faith by which thy people are enabled to hope in thy word, and to derive strong consolation, from the gracious invitations and promises of the Gospel.—Lord, we are frail and full of wants—Give us, O give us the bread of life; supply our needs, various as they are, according to thy riches in glory by Jesus Christ. We know not of ourselves what is right, or good, or wise; but thou knowest: therefore we beseech thee to undertake for us. We have no refuge but in thy power; and no hope but in thy promises.—We are encouraged to ask for the Holy Spirit: and we stand in continual need of his quickening, sanctifying, and comforting influences. May he take of the things that are Christ's and show them unto us. May he enlighten our understand-

ings, subdue our wills, and spiritualize our affections, and form our whole souls for thyself.—Do us good by all thy dispensations, whether pleasing or painful —All thy dealings with thy people are in faithfulness. By afflicting them, thou bringest them to a sight and sense of their real state, and renderest sin more evident, and more odious to them. Thou pourest them from vessel to vessel, to discover the offensive dross, to purify us from them, and make us partakers of thy holiness.—May we commit our way unto thee, and be enabled in unfeigned submission to say, here am I, let the Lord do what seemeth him good.—O that our faith may be so strengthened, and increased, that it may carry us above every dark cloud, whether it arise out of thy dispensations towards us, or from our own conscious guilt. Yea, when we are in darkness and have *no* light, may we trust in the Lord, and stay upon our God. We would now commit ourselves to thy care and keeping. —Thou hast been our help, therefore under the shadow of thy wings will we rejoice.—Every blessing we implore, is in the name, and for the sake, of our Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

Saturday Morning.

O THOU that dwellest in the highest heavens, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee! With humble reverence we desire to approach thy sacred majesty, and pay our cheerful homage unto

thee, the God of our lives, and the author of all our enjoyments.—We are not worthy of the least of thy mercies, for we have sinned against thy glorious majesty, and violated a thousand obligations to love and serve thee.—Nevertheless, thou abidest faithful; thou canst not deny thyself. Thou changest not, therefore we are not consumed. Thou hast not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us after our iniquities. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are thy ways higher than our ways, and thy thoughts than our thoughts.—Adored be thine infinite and matchless grace, that when thou mightest have imputed our trespasses unto us, and displayed thy holy indignation in our destruction, thou didst devise means that we might not be banished from thee. Thou didst send thy Son, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved—Grant, O God, that we may enjoy a sense of interest in all that he did and suffered.—May we know that we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace. Give us the Spirit of adoption, whereby we may be enabled to cry, Abba, Father.—Accompany thy pardoning mercy with thy purifying grace. Help us, O Father, thou God of all power and might, to put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to put on the new man, which is created after thine own image in righteousness and true holiness. Let the Saviour's love appear in our lives, to all that are round about us. May it make us zealous to embrace all opportunities of

administering to the happiness of one another. O let us diligently exercise love in abstaining from all uncharitableness of speech, from all frowardness and evil tempers, looking upon the failings of others with pity, as if they were our own. Banish from our dwelling all variance, whisperings, and evil surmisings. Let peace and gentleness, meekness and goodness be exercised by all of us, one towards another.—(Thou God, that makest men to be of one mind that dwell together, inspire us with a spirit of concord, meekness, and love. O let these benefits be derived from our family devotion, that we may agree better together, and live more in peace and quietness than those who call not upon thee; who lie down and rise up like the herd of the stall, never saying, "Where is God our Maker.") May God bless the children of this family. May they be always willing to receive instruction, and be diligent in the duties of their age and station in the world.—We seek not great things for them on earth; but earnestly pray that they may live in thy sight. May they know thee the God of their fathers, and be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.—Pour out thy blessing upon all seminaries of useful learning. Make those who teach in them to be nursing fathers of thy church, and blessings to the world at large. May those who receive instruction be preserved from the paths of the destroyer, and be enabled to serve their generation according to thy will.—May they be always diligent in acquiring such knowledge as may be needful to qualify them for their appointed stations.

Lord, protect and bless our native land; be as a wall of fire about us, and the glory in the midst of us. May our judges be just, and our exactors righteous. From the King on the throne to the lowest magistrate in office, give them the true spirit of their stations, and make them public blessings in their day. Make the rich charitable to the poor and needy.—O Lord, be thou as a father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow, the stranger's God, and the orphan's stay. We implore all that thou knowest to be needful for us in the name, for the sake, and through the intercession of him, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Saturday Evening.

O THOU King eternal, immortal, invisible!—Though thou art past finding out to perfection by men or angels; yet, we rejoice that we are not required to do homage to an unknown God. Thy works of creation declare thy glory and thy goodness. Thou hast not left thyself without witness; in that thou doest good to thy creatures, filling their hearts with food and gladness.

Behold we are witnesses for thee this day, that thou art merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth. For, O God,

how many have been our foolish and sinful departures from thee! We have loved and served the creature more than the Creator. We have leaned on broken reeds, and have pierced ourselves through with many sorrows. Sensible at length, of the vanity of the world, and of the insufficiency of every thing in it to make us happy, we would no longer lean to it, and make ourselves miserable. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Thou art our portion in the land of the living.—All things are changing around us; the fashion of this world passeth away. The conclusion of our days, and weeks, and years, reminds us that the things concerning us will also have an end.—Another week of our time is fled for ever!—Its means, and opportunities, and advantages are no more!—The morning cometh, and also the night; and how short is the space between them! Thus our days have fled like a shadow, a dream, a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Lord, make us to know how frail we are, how short our life is at the longest, and how uncertain at the best. Verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Awaken our consciences, and enlighten us in the knowledge of sin and of ourselves. May we feel our personal depravity, misery, and helplessness, and be led more and more to value the discoveries of the Gospel; and flee for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. O that Christ may be precious to us in all his offices. May we rejoice in him as of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctifica-

tion, and redemption. And may our love to him, and lively hope in him, excite us to look forward to that day when he shall come again and receive us to himself, that where he is there we may be also.

While we continue in this world, may we be enabled to abstain from all appearance of evil; the very God of peace sanctify us wholly; and may our whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; faithful art thou who hast called us, who also wilt do it.

Let thy blessing be upon thy churches every where. Grace be with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Yea, let grace and peace be multiplied to all them who have obtained like precious faith with us, in the righteousness of our God and Saviour. May they go from strength to strength, until they appear before God in Sion. And may their faith, which is more precious than gold though it be tried in the fire, be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Show thy favour to the land of our nativity. Let our Sovereign live before thee, and be a blessing from thee to us his subjects—May he know thee, the God of his fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind. Accept our thanks for all the mercies of the past week.—Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. Guard us through the night, and prepare us by refreshing sleep for the duties of another Sabbath. May we go into thine house in the multitude of thy mercies,

and worship in thy fear looking towards thy holy temple. O bring us again to thy holy mountain, and make us joyful in thy house of prayer. So we the sheep of thy pasture will give thanks for ever, and will show forth thy praise to all generations. *Amen.*

For a Private Person.

MOST glorious God! I would adore thee as the author of my being, and the lengthener of my days. I acknowledge myself to be under many and great obligations to love, serve, and glorify thee. Thou art my Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer.

Thou hast been pleased to awaken me to some sense of my sins, and of my danger, and to convince me of the necessity of forsaking them, and of returning to thee in the way of duty and holy obedience. I know that I am vile and wretched; that I have acted very wickedly and very foolishly; that I lived not only in a sad and inexcusable neglect of my duty, but in the wilful and habitual practice of that which is evil in thy sight. Yet still, I want to be more deeply affected with sorrow and remorse on account of my sins; to have a more alarming view of the dangers that threaten me, if I continue to indulge them. O that I might now know and see how evil a thing and bitter it is to have forsaken thee, the Lord my God. Lord, grant me such a comfortable sense of thy pardoning love as shall melt down my soul in grateful love, and fill

my sinful lips with thy praise. Then I shall say, O Lord, I will praise thee.—Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O my God! subdue, I beseech thee, my will entirely to thine. Let me live under the constraining influence of redeeming love; that so I may enjoy the pleasures of righteousness and true holiness. Thus may I accept the precious salvation, which the holy Jesus my Saviour came to procure and to bestow; a salvation from sin; from its power and pollution, as well as from its guilt and punishment. O Lord, enlighten and enliven my mind; tune my heart, and raise my affections to a suitable height and fervour of holy love; awaken every faculty within me, and while I am musing, may the fire burn in my soul. O my God! grant me a more abundant supply of thy divine influence, that I may abound more and more in all those fruits of righteousness and loving obedience, to thy glory, and my own and others' good.

Grant me thy special guidance in the great concerns of my soul. Lead me in the way of truth and righteousness for thy name's sake; preserve me from all hurtful errors in principle, and from every false way in practice. Let thy Spirit dwell in me, as my light, my strength, and my comforter. Enable me to keep the resolutions I have formed, and give me to experience the peace, the pleasure, and benefit of reducing them to practice.

Help me to meditate in thy precepts, and to have respect unto the way of thy testimonies, and to rejoice in them more than in all riches. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken me

in thy way. May I be enabled to cherish that fear which shall effectually preserve me from sin, and do thou shed abroad thy love in my heart, which shall sweetly constrain me daily to walk with thee on earth, so as to prepare me to dwell with thee for ever in heaven.

Grant me the graces of thy Spirit, those bright ornaments of the mind; and help me to live always under their influence. Teach me the great lesson of dependance on thee. I would not lean to my own understanding, nor rely on my own resolutions; but, remembering that all my springs are in thee, would seek to thee for the supplies of grace which I constantly need. O Lord, I beseech thee, impart them unto me. Raise me above this animal life, by the exercise of faith in eternal realities. Assist me to regulate and govern my passions, to overcome my carnal inclinations, and to resist the allurements of corporeal objects. Through the Spirit may I mortify my members which are on the earth, and which, while I am here will war against the interest and peace of my soul. O that I may now be in earnest, and trifle no more in the concerns of my soul! May I now wisely redeem the time, and improve my talents as becomes a dying creature, standing upon the threshold of eternity. Lord, hear me, and help me by thy grace. To thee I resign myself; on thee I depend. Be thou with me in every scene of life, and when I come to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, let thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

O my God! the Father of spirits, who hast

formed and fashioned them, and who hast the immediate government of them, visit this soul of mine; and so enlighten, purify, and sanctify me, as to fit me for thyself. Draw up my heart to high and heavenly objects, and cause me to breathe after a holy and blessed immortality, to press towards it, and long for admittance into it.

I bless thee, O my God, for any experience I have had of thy mercy and goodness—that thou hast opened mine eyes to see thee, and disposed my heart to own and honour thee in thy dispensations. Help me to do it more and more. May I have a deeper sense of thy perfections and excellencies, and more clearly discern the traces of them in all thy works and ways. I would own and adore thy hand in the common enjoyments of life. Of thee I would daily ask my daily bread, depending on thee for thy blessing on it. I would own thy providence in my outward prosperity, and bless thee for any success in my worldly affairs. I desire also to own thy providence in my adversity; knowing that no affliction cometh by chance, but that all is of thy wise appointment; that thou hast the management of every trial, as to the matter, and measure, and continuance of it, and that all things do work together for the good of all them that love thee, and are called according to thy purpose. If thou sendest an affliction and triest me in any of my dearest enjoyments, I would submit to thy holy will, and adore the wisdom and the grace of thy dispensations. Blessed is the man whom thou chastisest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy law. Help

me, O my God, to bear thy discipline with a calm and cheerful mind, waiting for thy salvation. O hear me now and bless me. Be thou the strength of my heart, the guide of my life, the support of my hope, and my portion for ever, through Jesus Christ my only Saviour, and thy well beloved Son, to whom, with thyself and Spirit, be all glory and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS.

The following are intended to be added to any of the general Prayers, in the proper place, as the particular circumstances of the Family may require.

** For any Member or Relative under a dangerous Affliction.*

SANCTIFY to us, heavenly Father, the afflictive dispensation of thy providence with which thou hast visited us. We bless thy name that in the midst of judgment thou rememberest mercy, and afflictest us less than our iniquities deserve. We would endeavour to humble ourselves under thy mighty hand, and to learn patience and obedience by the things that we suffer. By all the vicissitudes of this mortal life, may we learn to raise our affections from things here below, and be taught to look for our chief portion and happiness in a future and better world. If it be thy pleasure, remove this stroke from us, that we may again rejoice in thy

goodness, and bless thy holy name.—(Think, O God, for good upon him (or her) whom we now commend to thy compassionate regard. Comfort him upon a bed of languishing, and make all his bed in his sickness.—If thou art pleased that his sickness should terminate in death, O prepare him for the solemn hour, and be with him in it. But in submission to thy holy will, we would pray thee to recover him, that he may live in our sight, as well as in thine. Lord, speak thou the word, and he (or she) shall be healed. Direct to the use of the proper means, and put efficacy into them. Rebuke the disorder, renew the strength, and prolong the days of thy servant.) Especially we pray that the present dispensation, though painful, may be profitable, and may thy servant and all connected with him, have reason to acknowledge, it was good for us that we were afflicted.

2. *On Deliverance out of Affliction.*

WE bless thee more particularly, O Lord, for the late mercy with which thou hast visited this family. We found trouble and sorrow, and great perplexity; fear was on every side. Then we called upon thee, and thou wast attentive to our cry, and drew nigh to help us. We bless thee that thou hast heard us, and become our salvation. We will be glad and rejoice in thee, and sing praises unto thy name, O thou Most High. Many,

O Lord our God, are thy wonderful works, which thou hast done, and thy thoughts to us ward for good; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee,—they are more than can be numbered. What shall we render to thee the God of our mercies, who crownest our lives with thy goodness! Bless the Lord, O our souls, and all that is within us bless his holy name!—Write upon our hearts a law of love and gratitude, and may our lives be more than ever devoted to thy service.

3. When any Member or Relative is ill.

As it hath pleased thee, O Lord, to visit our family with sickness, we would acknowledge thy providence therein, and humble ourselves under thy mighty hand, adoring thy goodness that our afflictions have been few and light, in comparison to what we have deserved; and, at the same time, we earnestly pray that this affliction may not be unto death, but to thy glory, and our good. O thou great Physician, without whom all others are of no value, we pray thee to have compassion on thy servant, on whom thou hast laid thine afflictive hand. Thou sayest to diseases, Go, and they go; come, and they come, to answer the wise and gracious purposes of thy providence. If it be thy pleasure, restore thy servant to his health and capacity for usefulness in life. Especially, we pray that thou wilt give patience and submission to thy will, and

grant that the affliction may be sanctified to him (or her) that labours under it, and to all the members of the family, that it produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Do thou fit him, and all of us who are concerned for him, for thy holy will ; and may all these afflictions which are but for a moment, work for our eternal advantage.

4. On Recovery from Sickness.

WE join with thy servant in returning thee thanks for the great mercy thou hast shown to him in his recovery from a bed of languishing. May a grateful sense of this thy goodness deeply impress his mind, and all our minds, and may his life which thou hast spared, and may our lives which thou preservest by the watchful care of thy kind providence over us, be in all things devoted to thy service and glory ; to our present and everlasting comfort and joy.

5. After the Death of a Relation.

O THOU sovereign disposer of all events, we humbly acknowledge thy hand in the breach which thou hast made in this family. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Thou hast a right to do what thou wilt

with thine own. But Lord, we may, we must mourn, though we would not murmur. Support us we pray thee under this trial, and especially grant us the sanctified use of it. Teach us more effectually, by this stroke of thy providence, the vanity of human life, the uncertainty of our earthly comforts, our entire dependance upon thee, and the infinite value of thy favour, and of an interest in Jesus Christ, which alone can yield the soul solid support under the trials which await us in this vale of tears.

When creature comforts fail, O may we be led nearer to thyself, the inexhaustible fountain. Promote in us an entire submission to thy wise and holy will, believing, that thy judgments are right, and that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted us. Wean our hearts more from this world, and quicken us in our preparation for our departure out of it. Lord grant that we may be prepared to follow, whenever the summons shall come. Help us to live as becometh dying, and yet immortal creatures, ever suitably affected with the consideration of our mortality while here on earth.

And, O grant that whatever painful separations death may make between any of us who now survive, we may all at last meet in that blessed world, where there is no more sorrow, nor crying, nor death, but where we shall for ever live and rejoice together in the presence of our God and Saviour.

6 *After the Death of a Child.*

As it hath pleased thee, O thou sovereign disposer of all events, to take from us a dear child, help us in a spirit of entire resignation, to say, the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. Support us we pray thee, under this painful trial, and grant it may be sanctified to us; that both thy glory and our good may be promoted thereby. May we find that it is better to be in the house of mourning, than in the house of mirth; and that by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. May we be led to remember our sins, which, but for thy mercy, had slain all our comforts in this life, and forbidden all our hopes in the next. Blessed be the Lord, we do not sorrow as those that have no hope; for though our dear deceased child cannot return to us, we believe we shall go to him (or her) to share in the general joy of the blessed. May the hope of meeting all the children of the kingdom, make us more willing to depart hence, and more diligent in preparing for it.

7. *For one expecting the time of Travail.*

MAY thy favour and blessing attend thy handmaid expecting an important hour. Be not thou far from her when trouble is near. Be pleased to

carry her safely through it. Help her to trust in thee, that her mind be kept in perfect peace. Do thou command deliverance in due time, and make joy and gladness succeed to anxiety and pain. May every addition to this family be made in mercy, and do thou give us a name better than of sons and daughters.

8. *After a safe Delivery.*

THANKS be to thee, O Lord, for the deliverance vouchsafed to thy handmaid, in the perilous hour of nature's sorrow. Do thou perfect a recovery, and may a sense of this thy great goodness to her, deeply impress her mind, and all our minds. May thy servants be enabled to educate their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: and may it live to be the joy of its parents, and a blessing to the church and to the world.

9. *Before a Journey.*

Do thou, who preservest man and beast, protect thy servant from all the dangers to which he may be exposed. Teach him to acknowledge thee in all his ways; do thou direct his paths, and cause him to return in health and safety to his family and friends,

Preserve us going out and coming in, from this time forth and for ever.

10. *After a Journey.*

PRAISED be thy goodness, O thou God of our lives, for thy protecting care over thy servant, amidst the dangers of the way. Make us more habitually sensible of our obligations to thy providential care; and do thou continue to watch over us, both at home and abroad. While we rejoice in thy goodness, may we express our unfeigned gratitude by our zeal for thy glory, and a constant obedience to thy commands. Preserve us in the great journey of life, and bring us safe to our eternal home.

11. *At the close of the Year.*

WE desire, as a family, to bless thee that thou hast added another year to our lives. Though thousands have fallen at our right hand, and at our left, we are still in the land of the living, and appear together this day, the monuments of thy mercy. We thank thee for the continual enjoyment of family blessings through the year past, for the preservation of our health, (or recovery from sickness) for protection from the various calamities of life, whether at home or abroad; for every degree of success in

the labour of our hands; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory and blessedness hereafter. All is owing to the riches of thy goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, for we have been unprofitable servants, and justly mightest thou have cut us down as cumberers of the ground. We lament that the past years have been witness to so many failings and sins. We confess them with sorrow and shame. We beseech thee of thy infinite mercy to pardon them through the atonement of thy Son, and grant us grace to watch and strive against the repetition of them. May old things pass away, and all things become new.

12. *At the beginning of a New Year.*

HAVING obtained help of thee, we are enabled this morning to raise an Ebenezer, and say, "hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Though our multiplied sins and aggravated offences have risen up to heaven, and called for vengeance on our heads, we are not yet swept off from the land of the living, nor cut down as cumberers of the ground: on the contrary, goodness and mercy have followed us all our days; and in consequence of thy paternal care and tender regard, we have been preserved from many evils, and upheld under many trials. O that our hearts may be inspired with becoming sentiments of gratitude, and that we may consecrate the commencement of this year to the honour and glory of thy holy name.

We desire to begin the new year with God, and afresh to devote ourselves to thy service. Accept, O most merciful Father, the renewed dedication which we would now make of ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, unto thee. Be thou our God, and let us be thy people. Dwell with us while here below, and when we are called to leave this world, may we be admitted to dwell with thee above.

END OF THE THIRD PART.

ESSAYS

ON

DOMESTIC DUTIES, &c.

PART THE FOURTH.

On the Importance of Retirement and Meditation.

"O BLEST retirement ! friend to life's decline,
Still cheer this household with thy peace divine ;
For blest are they who crown in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease ;
Who quit a world where strong temptations try,
And since 'tis hard to combat,—learn to fly."

"O sacred solitude ! divine retreat !
Choice of the prudent ! envy of the great !"

Young.

SOMETHING of religion (if it might be so called) seems inseparable from the nature of man. He, only, of all creatures on earth, is capable of it. And, although by reason of moral darkness, he knows not so much as wherein it consists ; yet he often sighs from the absence of an unknown good. But this circumstance shows rather what he once was, than what he now is. Indeed, he does not desire religion,

but freedom from the evils which the absence of it occasions. He seeks the happiness, but shuns the means, and hates the author and source of it.—In nothing does his blindness and depravity more appear than in his aversion to serious thinking, and spiritual meditation. That all men think, more or less, is not denied; but, alas! how few think with propriety, or bend their thoughts to right objects. The intellectual powers of man, and his unwillingness to exercise them, are almost equally surprising. Reason, is the gift of God to man, and is that which distinguishes him from, and raises him above, inferior creatures. Possessing this, he is capacitated for the noblest, and most sublime contemplations. Even while the body is chained down to an unconscious mass of matter, the soul can soar,* and expatiate in all the variety of thought; can compare the numberless objects which present themselves before it; can calculate with certainty, and come to conclusions which often astonish itself, as well as excite the wonder and admiration of others. All these powers of investigation, of invention, of comparing, combining, remembering, and communicating ideas, issue from, and are the peculiar capacities of this God-like and angelic principle. If we advert to the stupendous author and parent of the human soul, and to the account given us of its creation, nothing more grand can be conceived of by it.

* "The soul uneasy, and confin'd at home.
Rests and expatiates on a world to come."

Pope.

Look up to the heavens; immensely high, immeasurably wide as they are, God only spake, and instantly, with all their hosts, they had their being. The earth, the sea, the air, with all their millions of beasts, birds, and fishes, were formed instantaneously by the breath of his mouth. But behold! before the human soul is formed, a counsel of the Eternal Trinity is held. God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our own likeness. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." (Gen. i. 26, 27.) He formed his soul in its moral faculties and powers, a sinless immortal transcript of himself!—The grandeur of man, as an intellectual being, is no less clearly evinced by the Revelation given to him, since the loss of his pristine advantages.—The most sublime ideas of his Maker's moral character, the most surprising scheme devised by infinite wisdom for human salvation, are submitted to his investigation, and delineated to his view in the sacred volume; and which are intended to guide all his thoughts, to influence his heart, to regulate his life, and to furnish matter for his most delightful meditations.—This exercise of the mind, is of the first importance, because it is connected with the most beneficial consequences. Angels need not to meditate. They behold truth in the essence of it; and living in its native light, are ever warmed with its effulgent rays. But, poor man must think and meditate, to bring the truth to him, and to be in any suitable measure affected thereby.—Meditation is to the mind, what digestion is to the body. Food must be digested. Health and life are not

maintained without this. If food be not digested as well as taken into the stomach, the body is rather weakened than strengthened thereby. Without meditation, our thoughts, how rich and valuable soever they may be, are confused, and without that proper arrangement, which serious thinking would give them. Meditation would assort our different ideas of sacred truth, and assign to each its proper place and influence in the mind, and on the life. Thus digesting the important truths we read, or hear, the soul is nourished and strengthened in the divine life, and made to partake of greater and more refined pleasures than words can describe, or language express.

By meditation then, is meant, not a transient reflection of a serious nature, but a fixed contemplation upon some spiritual topic, which is purposely chosen to occupy the mind, with a view either to gain more thorough acquaintance with it, or to have the heart more deeply impressed by it, and to apply it for the purpose of spiritual edification. When the mind of man is fully impressed with the necessity of attaining divine wisdom, it becomes an object of no common solicitude, to inquire how this important point is to be accomplished. So long accustomed to expatiate in the fields of dissipation, and to direct every energy to the gratification of momentary pleasures, the thoughts are too unsettled to rest at once in that tranquillity, which opens the path to so desirable a companion as contemplation. If we "peep through the loop holes of retreat," as Cowper styles it, upon the world, from the elevation of

a calm retreat, it is like viewing the ocean from the point of a promontory, the waves rise and fall, they recede with the wind or the tide ; then return in tempests, and foam over the projecting rock. The avocations of mankind, now agitated by contending passions, now hurried by the tumults of business, naturally recal this image to the mind.

If our distractions, and our dangers arise from too indiscriminate an acquaintance and intercourse with the world, and from the indulgence of a turbulent and restless disposition, we should seek our remedy in the opposite behaviour ; we should withdraw into scenes of quiet, we should inure our minds to reflection, and contemplate piously and seriously the end and aim of that being, which the bounty of heaven hath bestowed upon us. Meditation becomes a powerful mean of grace, when employed in the service of religion, and retirement from the busy world ; for this important purpose it will be found not only an *advantage* to the *man*, but the *duty* of the *christian*. “Solitude,” says an elegant writer, “is the hallowed ground which religion hath in every age chosen for her own. There, her inspiration is felt, and her secret mysteries elevate the soul. There, falls the tear of contrition ; there, rises towards heaven the sigh of the heart ; there melts the soul with all the tenderness of devotion, and pours itself forth before him who made, and him who redeemed it.”—Here, abstracted from foreign objects, the soul rests only on itself. God alone is present ; and awful are the meditations, which are then pre-

sented to the mind. Every thing which can engage, every thing which can command attention, rushes into the heart; and there is then room to entertain them. The soul is fitted for devotion. Her God is perceived to be with her, because she is with him. When the truly retired Christian is alone, he is (as one says,) "never less alone," for God is with him and in him of a truth. He not only goeth into his study or his closet, but he gets within himself, into the closet of his heart, and watches all the motions of nature and grace. Thus in time he becomes truly learned in that most difficult subject—"his own self." When we talk much with others, it is hardly possible, in a nature so fallen and corrupt as our's, not to talk amiss. But when we commune with God, he speaks so with us, as to give an increase of wisdom and grace, with much solid refreshment of mind.* His word will become plain and familiar to our souls; we enter into the spirit of his ways, and our souls feel many undoubted proofs, both of their own immortality, and of the great blessedness of approaching glory. This, wherever it abounds, deadens the affections of a Christian to the low and vain discourse of the world, renders him

* And wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet-retired solitude;
Where, with her best nurse, contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustles of resort,
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes too impair'd.

Milton.

more happy in, and fitter for his retirement, as well as enlivens his hopes, and forms his heart for God and heaven.*

For the right performance of this important duty, both reason and revelation point out proper subjects, suitable situations, and the most beneficial seasons. I call it a *duty*; and if we consult the sacred page, such it will be found, and that it is not a matter of indifference, or a kind of free-will offering, which may be performed or not; but that so far as persons have capacity for it, they should regard it as an *important* duty. As such, it is recommended in Scripture. Consideration is frequently enjoined, and the neglect of it severely reproofed. Meditation on the Sacred Writings was expressly commanded to the Jews, as well as a diligent reading of them. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night." (Josh. i. 8.) Hence David describes a good, or godly man, that he delights in the law of the Lord, and meditates therein day and night. And of himself he says,

- * For the attentive mind,
By this harmonious action on her powers,
Becomes herself harmonious, wont so oft
In outward things to meditate the charm
Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home
To find a kinder order, to exert
Within herself this elegance of love,
This fair inspir'd delight: her temper'd powers
Refin'd at length, and ev'ry passion wears
A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.

Akenside.

"O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day." (Psalm cxix. 97.) This he might have done had he lived until now, for here is ample store, and almost endless variety. He not only read the holy Scriptures, but he *studied* them; and they were his constant exercise and entertainment. He delighted to peruse the history therein contained, for the information of his understanding; the precepts therein delivered, as a most exact rule of life; the promises there given, as a never failing spring of consolation; and the whole as the means of sanctifying his heart, and maintaining pleasing intercourse with heaven.

There is no exercise of the mind for which the Scriptures have more abundantly provided matter, than for meditation. To set reasonable beings on thinking, seems to be one principle design of the sacred records. Hence, when we read and meditate as their great Author directs—

..... "We feel within ourselves
His energy divine: He tells the heart,
He meant, he made us to behold and love
What he beholds and loves.

..... Thus men with God
Hold converse: grow familiar day by day
With his conceptions, act upon his plan,
And form to his the relish of their soul."

Although the situation or place for meditation is in a general point of view, indifferent, whether it be in a private room, (Matt. vi. 6,) or an open field, (Gen. xxiv. 63,) whether on a mountain, (Matt. xiv. 23,) a plain, or on the house top, (Acts

x. 9,) being comparatively of small moment; yet the intimations of Scripture respecting the practice of good men are, even in the smallest matters, worthy of our regard.—If there be any place more proper, or any time more favourable to reflection than others, it must be that in which you are free from all intruding company, and interruptions from without. When you have retired from the world, and the world from you; when the hurry of business is withdrawn; when the tumult of the soul subsides, and is succeeded by a calm stillness; when the darkness which surrounds you prevents the interference of sensible objects, and invites the mental eye to look inward on itself, and upward to its God;—

..... "Then is the time,
 For those whom wisdom and whom nature charm,
 To steal themselves from the degen'rate crowd,
 And soar above this little scene of things;
 To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet;
 To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
 And woo lone quiet in her silent walks."

Of Isaac it is said, that he went out into the field at even-tide to meditate.* This exercise requires solitude.—Most of mankind bury themselves in the

* Prayer should follow meditation, and meditation should always, if possible, precede prayer. The Hebrew word (shuach) mentioned in Gen. xxiv. 63, which our translation reads, "to meditate," the septuagint, the Geneva translation reads, "to pray." The word signifies both; which shows that they are nearly allied. Meditation is an excellent preparative to prayer, and prayer a happy and gracious

bustle and noise of this world; strangers to retirement and devout reflection, ignorant of the sublime pleasures of the contemplative soul in the field,* the garden, or the closet, they are like so many machines, which are kept in motion by external influence.—Happy that Christian, who, accustomed to retirement and holy contemplation, can say,—

improvement of meditation. Isaac went out into the field to meditate, and no doubt was thereby led to pray also, if he did not at first intend so to do. "There is," says Mr. Schougal, "a sort of prayer, wherein, though we utter no sound, yet we conceive the expressions and form the words, as it were, in our own minds; and there is another and more sublime kind of prayer, wherein the soul takes a higher flight, and having collected all its forces by long and serious meditation, it darts itself (if I may so speak) towards God in sighs, and groans, and thoughts too big for expression. As when, after a deep contemplation of the divine perfections appearing in all his works of wonder, it addresseth itself to him in the profoundest adoration of his majesty and glory: or when, after sad reflections on its vileness and miscarriages, it prostrates itself before him with the greatest confusion and sorrow, not daring to lift up its eyes, or utter one word in his presence: or when, having well considered the beauties of holiness, and the unspeakable felicity of those that are truly gracious and good, it panteth after God, and sendeth up such vigorous and ardent desires as no words can sufficiently express, continuing and repeating each of these acts as long as it finds itself upheld by the force and impulse of the previous meditation.

* "Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow; not a cloud imbibes
The setting sun's effulgence; not a strain
From all the tenants of the warbling shades

"In secret silence of the mind,
My God, and there my heaven I find."

"This sacred shade and solitude, what is it?
'Tis the felt presence of the Deity."

Under his blessed influence, and by his gracious aid, how delightful to contemplate his glorious character, his wonderful works, his all wise providence, and his astonishing grace and goodness. Realizing his presence, trusting in his faithfulness, power, and love, as our covenant God in Jesus Christ, what light, liberty, purity, peace, hope, and holy joy are inspired in the Christian mind!* No dark thoughts or perplexing imaginations settle upon the

Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
Fresh pleasures unproved."

Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination.

"The tide of life, swift always in its course,
May run in cities with a brisker force;
But no where with a current so serene,
Or half so clear, as in the rural scene."

Cowper.

* "Easily may faith admit that all
The good which we enjoy from heaven descends;
But that from us aught should ascend to heaven,
So prevalent, as to concern the mind
Of God's high blest, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer,
Or one short sigh of human breath, upborn
E'en to the seat of God! For since I sought
By prayer the' offended Deity to' appease,
Methought I saw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear.—Peace returned
Home to my breast."

Milton.

piously contemplative soul. Clear are the prospects, sweet the musings of a meditating Christian, with the book of revelation in his hand, and the love of its holy truths in his heart; every cloud of doubt or error gradually disappears, heaven opens to his view, and by the penetrating eye of faith he discovers "the land that is very far off," and searches the regions of eternity.

It is the privilege of the subject of grace to live above this world, and to enjoy the foretastes of glory while here below; and what will so much tend to wean the heart from the world, as frequent meditation on its vanity? What will tend to raise the mind above the fear of death so much as frequent contemplation on the glories of heaven, to which the Christian is an heir through grace?

Let us retire, then, to the retreats of solitude, and by the aid of holy contemplation, call off our thoughts from the trifles of time, and the vain objects of mortal pursuit. Let us thence look back upon a world agitated by contending interests, and too frequently the scene of tumult and disorder. Let us look forward with complacency to an eternity of tranquillity and comfort. The assurances of the Gospel bring these visions nearer to our view, and we look upon them as a weary traveller on a delightful prospect; we consider them as the last retreat of the afflicted, as the native home, and ultimate happiness of the heavenly minded.*

* Nothing contained in the preceding essay is intended to discourage intercourse with society, or in the least to give

On the Lord's Supper.

THE ordinance of the Lord's Supper is at once the most solemn, instructive, and consoling to a believing sinner. By this holy ordinance we are

countenance to a monastic seclusion from it. An entire withdrawal from the world is as contrary to the true enjoyments of man as a tumultuous intercourse with it. The philosopher, who carries you back to the first principles of society, and places you in a desert, may offer a flattering picture to the mind of him whose irritable temper is daily teased with a multitude of petitioners; but it is a delusive happiness which he presents, like that of the deity of Epicurus, who is represented as sitting remote from every thing human or celestial; neither interested for himself, nor regarding the wants and necessities of others. One end of retirement and meditation is to fit the mind for social converse; and indeed, either of them separated from the other, will become both unpleasant and unprofitable. The latter would be injurious to society, as well as to the individual.* Were all persons that are capable of enjoying and improving retirement, to give themselves up wholly to it, the loss sustained by the already impoverished part of mankind, (which is by far the largest,) would be incalculable as well as deplorable. As it respects the former, who hide themselves from their fellow creatures, "withholding from others more than is meet, it tendeth to poverty."

"Teaching we learn, and giving we retain
The birth of intellect; when dumb forgot.
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;
Speech burnishes our mental magazine;
Brightens for ornament, and wets for use."

Young.

* "The converse qualities for solitude,
As exercise for salutary rest."

Young.

led into the most intimate fellowship and communion with the Lord Jesus, and the rich participation of the benefits of his life and death, and all the blessings of his glorious salvation.

In every celebration of this sacred solemnity, we show forth the Lord's death; and also give a fresh testimony of our dependance on the sacrifice of that precious body and blood therein represented, for our pardon, acceptance with God, security from wrath, and as the ground of our hope of the future enjoyment of eternal life. But notwithstanding the excellent nature and holy tendency of this divine institution, its design is but little perceived or regarded by the bulk of professing Christians. Some rest in the outward form; others are affrighted from it through terrific and mistaken apprehensions of the ends for which it was instituted by its beneficent Author. By a third class it is abused or perverted, through their attending on it in a cold and careless manner. And this may happen (as in the case of the Corinthians) to Christians indeed. Now in order to counteract these evils, and also to assist the serious inquirer in the right understanding of "this service," and that through the divine blessing, he may the better engage in it, I design to give a plain scriptural view of the ordinance called the *Lord's Supper*. As many of my readers may have neither money to purchase, or time to peruse, books of greater length, I will confine myself to those errors which seem generally to prevail upon the subject; and state those things respecting it which are more especially necessary to be known.

1st. It is no uncommon notion among those who are ignorant of its true design, to suppose that the partaking of the Lord's Supper goes a great way towards saving them. They think that the mere receiving the bread and wine from the hands of the minister, is to make them fit for heaven, and give them a title to it. This ordinance, which perhaps has never been the subject of their serious consideration during the time of health, is frequently sought for to quiet the mind when death is approaching. The friends of the dying man, being themselves equally ignorant, will urge upon him the performance of this *last* duty, (as it is called,) absurdly imagining that it will serve to ensure his pardon, and be a safe and sure passport to heaven. They seem to fancy that the sacrament is to act in the way of a charm, and are therefore quite surprised and confounded if they are told that it cannot save them.* Now if any who read this essay have been in the habit of thinking in this way, let

* It is to be feared, that many who have long made a profession of religion, live rather upon the remembrance of their supposed integrity, religious character, or else upon their fancies and feelings, than upon the love and sufferings of a crucified Saviour. Hence it is, that the ordinance which is intended to gladden the hearts of penitent believing sinners, is so often made a rendezvous for blind pharisees, labouring to cleanse the outside of the cup and platter, while entire strangers to that cleansing of the conscience which comes to the guilty, from the blood of the covenant, set before them in the Lord's Supper.

me solemnly assure them, that such notions are quite contrary to the word of God, and the dictates of genuine Christianity. Beware, therefore, as you regard your eternal welfare, of supposing that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper can do *any thing* towards your salvation. None are fit to partake of this ordinance, who are not sensible of the folly and danger of trusting in it.

2ndly. A second error, common to a different class of persons, is founded on a misinterpretation of some awful passages of Holy Writ, which respect the abuse of the Lord's Supper. They read, especially in St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter xi. 29, the following alarming words: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." The persons concerned in this awful passage are not those weak and trembling believers, who, by wrong constructions on it, have been kept from coming to this spiritual entertainment, and who are especially invited to partake of it; but those professors of Christianity who, in coming to this Gospel-feast, regard little more in it than the gratification of the body, or wished to accommodate their profession of Christianity to their temporal, rather than to their spiritual interest: Hence the inspired Apostle warned them of such gross abuse of this holy institution; and which should admonish us also to exercise constant watchfulness, lest we should pervert this holy supper to any carnal end. For this is the plain meaning of

the 29th verse: He who in an unworthy manner being ignorant and unholy,* eats of this bread and drinks of this cup irreverently, by such an attendance, and in so doing, exposes himself to the righteous displeasure of a holy God, who will be sanctified by those who come nigh unto him, and will rebuke and chasten those he loves. Declarations these, that may justly awaken all who come to this holy and spiritual ordinance, to a godly fear, and holy circumspection, but do not in the least discourage any enlightened sinner, who, under a sense of his guilt and unworthiness, and adoring the riches of divine grace, through the blood of Christ, is desirous of waiting on the Lord at his table; such will find themselves welcome and approved under all their involuntary defects, by that merciful High Priest, who is sensibly touched with the feel-

* Those of my readers who are members of the Established Church would do well to consult the articles of the religion they profess. The 29th runs thus: "The wicked, and such as be void of a living faith, although they do carnally press with their teeth the body and blood of Christ, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ: but rather to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign of so great a thing." He that comes not to this table as one delivered from eternal wrath by that death represented in the supper, comes grossly ignorant indeed; but who that partakes in this just and necessary view of things, can ever think he is in any wise deserving in himself of the privilege he enjoys. Personal merit therefore is inconsistent with partaking of those symbols of a Saviour's body, under a believing sense of our being indebted wholly to the grace of God for our salvation; and such a sense of the matter is absolutely necessary to answer the design of the institution.

ing of their infirmities who trust in him. For the removing of groundless fears from the minds of humble Christians, I would observe that the charge does not lie against them.* Some of this blessed character may be forward to conclude against themselves. Methinks as though I heard one of them say, "Surely I am guilty; for how often has my mind, when at the table of the Lord, been suddenly drawn aside from the serious contemplation on which it ought wholly to have dwelt with constant delight. How common it is for my heart to wander! and how frequently do vain and impertinent thoughts crowd in upon me, and interrupt my meditations! How seldom are my affections raised, my thoughts collected, or my graces (if I have any) exercised! Alas, I am filled with shame and con-

* It is beyond all doubt that the Apostle intended those who, through carelessness and the omission of known duties, or indulgence of some sinful practice, do not discern the Lord's body. These Corinthians neglected to meditate on the nature and design of this spiritual ordinance, and acted as persons who had forgot for what ends it was instituted, which the Apostle rehearses to them, ver. 24—26. They appear from ver. 28, to have neglected self-examination. They did not judge, that is, search their own hearts before they came to this supper, as it is suggested ver. 31, and it is evident, from ver. 21, 22, that their disorders and excesses rendered them unfit; so that their eating and drinking unworthily, was owing to their own wilful default. From hence it may be safely inferred, that the humble, circumspect believer, how conscious soever of involuntary failings, may dismiss every slavish fear of suffering that judgment, denounced on the presumptuous transgressor.

fusion when I reflect on the manner in which I sometimes, at least, attend upon this sacred institution. Surely I am of those who eat and drink unworthily." Thus may some persons reason, and cast themselves down; but very unjustly: for from all this matter of complaint, no charge can be inferred against them; since these are not surely voluntary failings, but such as the most diligent and watchful are liable to experience.

3dly. There is a third error, no less dangerous than the foregoing. It respects those who come to the table of the Lord, and think they ought to come, because they are moral and decent characters, and are, *in their own opinion*, worthy. Such persons are sadly ignorant of the nature of the service itself, and of the characters for whose comfort and encouragement it was designed, while they profess to rest their hopes of salvation on the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction which the Son of God offered upon the cross, they are depending upon their own duties, and good works, (falsely so called,) and upon their regular attendance upon the outward forms of religion. They do "not discern the Lord's body." They are unacquainted with the deep depravity and wickedness of their own hearts, and are on that account ignorant of the design and end of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. They may not, indeed, despise him altogether, but they suppose he died to make up what is wanting in their own obedience. Thinking that salvation is to be obtained partly by their duties, and partly by trusting to what Jesus Christ has

done for the world, in this way they deceive themselves and others, and are by far more awful characters than any mentioned by the inspired Apostle.*

* This, to some of my readers, may seem a strange and unreasonable assertion. But to demonstrate it to be strictly true, we need only to observe the drift and tenor of the Apostle's reasoning in the chapter before quoted. From the whole of what the Apostle writes to the Corinthians upon the subject, it is evident (although men who are not the subjects of a saving change, and consequently are destitute of true faith, have, and do come to the table of the Lord,) that the Corinthians were considered by the Apostle in the judgment of charity to be true believers, and as such, in a justified state, and, therefore, however exposed to the rod of rebuke and chastening, they were not liable to eternal condemnation. (Acts xiii. 39; John v. 24.) The painful perplexities of good men upon this subject seem to have originated chiefly in a misunderstanding of two words employed by St. Paul, viz.—“unworthily,” and “damnation.” The first of these being a Scripture word, used on this very occasion, must be a proper one; but then it must be properly understood and applied. It is commonly supposed to mean, that we must have a worthiness in ourselves, or of our own procuring and providing—a something to recommend us to the favour of God. But it is needless to multiply arguments to prove that nothing more is intended by the term, “worthy,” than a fit or suitable state of mind. A poor criminal, how guilty soever, receives a pardon worthily, or in a suitable temper of mind, when he expresses and feels a sorrowful sense of his guilt, and with thankfulness embraces the free, undeserved mercy of his offended sovereign. If personal merit was required in order to a safe and honourable attendance at the Lord's Table, what man or woman in the world could approach and partake of it without presumption! The word *Κρίμα*, rendered “damnation” in our common reading, signifies, not only eternal

They continue contentedly, in an alarming and most dangerous state, having no scriptural hope of heaven, and being in the constant habit of profaning the Lord's table by their unwarranted attendance there. Let such persons "examine themselves" by the words which they use in partaking of this holy ordinance. Let them enquire whether they are not "dissembling with their lips," when they join in that humble confession, professing "the remembrance of their sins to be grievous to them, and the burden of them intolerable." Let

punishment, but also self-conviction. Condemnation, as well as damnation, is signified by this word. (See Rom. xiv. 23.) "Is damned," in this passage, signifies, pronouncing a person guilty on conviction of a fault. (Vide Leigh's *Critica Sacra*, and Dr. Whitby in *Loc.*) Temporal judgments are also intended by this term, and this is evidently designed by the Apostle in the chapter above referred to. (See ver. 30—32.) The condemnation of the last judgment is certainly not meant here, but a fatherly chastisement, with a view to amendment; and inflicted here, to prevent a worse punishment hereafter. This should, nevertheless, be a warning to all loose, careless, and carnal professors of every denomination. Jehovah is a jealous God. He is also infinitely holy, and will be sanctified by all who come nigh him. If the Lord will thus chasten his people for their transgressions, that they may not be condemned with the world, what must be the lot of those who, notwithstanding their profession, are servants to sin, and who walk in pride, covetousness, or the indulgence of other deceitful and filthy lusts. These persons, if they will reflect, may see that stores of vengeance are in reserve for them, if they repent not. Let no one deceive himself, "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

them try themselves again by the concluding prayer of the same service, wherein they make a solemn dedication of themselves, in body and soul, to God their Saviour; and let them enquire, as in the sight of him who knoweth their most secret thoughts, whether they do intend and mean thus to devote themselves; for if not, they are sadly “dissembling with God,” and guilty of the most awful and solemn mockery.

4thly. There is another and gross error relating to the Lord's Supper, and it is the pretence under which many excuse their neglect of this ordinance, namely, that they are unfit to attend on it. To refrain from partaking of the ordinance, because we see ourselves unworthy is a mistake; as has been shown, both with respect to ourselves, and to the design of the ordinance; but to excuse ourselves in the habitual neglect of it, is to make a sort of merit of our sin. And who cannot see that this must be a delusion? In this way a man might excuse himself from any spiritual duty whatever.—Men are but little aware of the deceitfulness of their own hearts when they can satisfy themselves, and keep their conscience quiet with such vain excuses.* To take

* The folly of those who intermit their attendance at the Lord's table, under a pretence that some person or persons have offended them, or the apprehension of such not being worthy partakers, is very surprising. It is so void of sense, as well as of charity and moderation, that one would think an understanding humble Christian would blush at the very thoughts of such unseemly behaviour. This conduct savours of a pharisaical spirit; and some who act in this manner,

encouragement and think themselves safe, because they have not been guilty of profaning this solemn institution; is absurdity itself. You are conscious you are not prepared, and therefore you most contentedly stay away! Consider what you say, when you declare, that you are unfit for this ordinance. You want preparation to come to this holy place. But what is this want? It is want of love to God, of faith in Christ, of repentance for sin; it is the want of holiness of heart and life, of humility, and of every good thing. And if you are not fit to come, are you at all concerned about it? Or had you rather keep at a distance from Christ and his people? If you have any regard for the Lord Jesus, why do you not keep his commandments? Or do you imagine, that by this neglect you free yourselves from all obligations to holiness, and that you are at liberty to live as you list? Your obligations do not

may be found to think more highly of themselves, than they ought to think; yet, I hope that for the most part, it proceeds from ignorance. If the occasion be a personal offence, which is most generally the case, it is much if the absentee shall not find upon a faithful examination, he has greater reason to condemn himself. Let him consider whether he has attended to the direction of our Lord in cases of offence, and whether there be not a mixture of pride, and private resentment in his seeming concern, lest a person who has offended *him*, should not be fit for the ordinance. On these considerations we have ground to conclude it often happens, that an accuser who fills not up his place at the table of the Lord, is more guilty than those on whose account he stays away. Let every one look to himself in this matter. (1 Cor. xi. 29.)

depend upon your consent. Do what you will, you are under the strongest obligations to God, and you cannot shake them off. And what avails it that you can avoid the Lord's table, when you cannot possibly shun death, judgment, and eternity? and if you are not prepared for this ordinance of worship in the church on earth; much less are you prepared for those more exalted forms of worship of the church in heaven.—But I return to those whose piety is less doubtful. Let every true Christian faithfully and impartially examining and judging himself, come freely and frequently to this Gospel feast,* for next to the abuse, the neglect of this supper is displeasing to Him whose grace has ordained it; saying to all his disciples, "*do this in remembrance of me.*" Should any dear friend on his death bed, present you with a gift, as a proof of his love for you, and tell you that he wished you frequently to look at this token of his regard when he was dead and gone;

* The sacrament of the Lord's supper, is a public ordinance, and a social duty; and to be administered only in, or to, a church; there being no foundation in the divine word, for giving it to a particular person in private, as the manner of some is. It is a church ordinance, and what the disciples are to partake of "together." (1 Cor. xi. 18.) The practice of requiring a person to partake of it, to qualify him for some political place or purpose, is a most abominable perversion of this ordinance, a base prostitution of it, and a crying sin of this country. That any should be admitted to receive the sacrament, concerning whom, it is notorious, that they come to gratify their pride or covetousness, or, at best to supply their necessities, is no less ridiculous, than it is profane and wicked.

would you not do it? Would you not recollect his dying request, and call to remembrance the love he bore you, and the benefits bestowed upon you? Now this is but a faint figure or picture of what in one respect the Son of God, our gracious Saviour, intended by the appointment of the sacrament. "It was instituted (says the pious Bishop Hall,) to be a sign, a seal, and a pledge unto us of Christ Jesus given for us, and given to us." And he has commanded his believing people to meet together to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, to commemorate his dying love towards them. His wisdom is no less conspicuous than his goodness in this appointment. What could have been contrived better calculated to affect the mind with the evil and baseness of sin, and with the love and kindness of the Saviour!—Through the influence and blessing of the Holy Spirit upon this divinely appointed ordinance, faith in Christ crucified is exercised, grace and peace communicated, and love to Christ and his people abundantly promoted.

On Visiting the Sick.

THIS is as serious, important, and difficult a duty as any in which a Christian man, or even a Christian minister, can engage. It requires much consideration, and no small degree of pious zeal, to discharge it with fidelity and usefulness. A Christian pastor is called to attend all his people in their different afflictions, the poor, as well as the rich;

the ignorant and unlearned as well as persons of better talents and a more liberal education ; and not overlooking children, or even the meanest of servants : and that (if there be any probability of doing good) without formal invitations from them. There is indeed a forwardness in intruding into a sick chamber, that often proves troublesome both to the afflicted themselves, and those who are tenderly interested in them. Yet to the afflicted, pity should be shown : and it is undoubtedly the generous ardour of sympathetic friendship, that hastens good men to their bed-sides ; while the professions of some, and the connections of others, make it more immediately their duty to be often there.—Every minister may not have it in his power to do this to a degree he could wish ; the great distance at which some live from him, and the multiplicity of business in which others are engaged, ill health, or various and important avocations may render it exceeding difficult, and utterly impracticable to secure frequent interviews with many of them, at least for such purposes as these. But every minister that desires to approve his fidelity to the souls committed to his care, will gladly embrace the opportunity, and endeavour to improve it in the best manner he is able. And that, not only to direct him in his public prayers with them in the house of God, and his discourse to them there ; but likewise to enable him to know how to address *them*, and apply to the Almighty in their behalf in affliction. My object in this essay is rather to assist the private Christian, than to dictate to the public officer of religion, in

the important work of visiting the sick. I take it for granted, that it is a Christian's duty ; a duty in which every Christian may in his proper sphere be called occasionally to engage. It is a wise and good maxim, though by an apocryphal writer ; (Ecclus. vii. 35,) "Be not slow to visit the sick, for that shall make thee to be beloved." An inspired apostle has carried this sentiment still further, and urges a more weighty consideration to enforce the practice ; representing it as an act of pure religion, "to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction." It will be brought forward in the last great day, as a distinguishing character of real piety. "I was sick and ye visited me." This good work is therefore recommended to *all* in *every* situation, who regard the will of God, or the welfare of man. This being the case, it is equally the wish of humanity and of friendship, that such visits may be both acceptable and useful. The experienced and tender Christian needs not to be informed that in many cases the afflicted require all the caution and care of which they are capable. That they need to be attended with a wakeful eye, a quick ear, a soft voice, a light foot, a gentle hand, a tender heart. Or in other words, that it becomes those about them to exercise prudence and skill in the whole of their department, as well as to treat them with all possible delicacy and tenderness : not only to avoid every word, and even every look that would either increase their complaints, or render them less able to bear them ; but to behave even towards them in such a manner as to lighten their burthen, or soothe and

cheer their spirits under it; preserving uniformly and conscientiously in all that they say and do, an inviolable regard to the dictates of true wisdom, sound knowledge, and strict fidelity. For in no case whatever can any who attend the sick be justified in attempting to deceive them; especially where their most important interest is concerned, and depending.* It may happen when a minister

* As life is peculiarly uncertain in the circumstances to which we refer, such conduct *then* would be inexcusable in a *Physician*, but still more so, in a *Divine*, to whom that great charge is more especially committed. But Physicians and Ministers are not the only persons capable of deceiving the sick and the dying; their own relations have but too often been guilty of such false delicacy, such cruel tenderness. They have buoyed them up with fallacious hopes both for time and eternity; and forbidden or prevented the approach of those who might have undeceived them to their everlasting advantage. The want of piety in the medical profession has almost become proverbial. The cause of this, is the same as that from which the infidelity and impiety of others proceed; even the common depravity of human nature. But that which occasions sceptical and infidel principles to be more frequently imbibed by medical men is, perhaps, those observations which arise out of the peculiar circumstances of their profession. They witness many seeming casualties and contingences with respect to the birth, life, and death of human beings. All things seem to be subject to mere chance, and accidental fatality. Hence, no superintending providence is recognized by them; the testimony of revelation being disregarded. This is the more to be regretted, considering the abundant opportunities of usefulness which persons in this respectable profession enjoy. Some happy exceptions have, however been made by the distinguishing grace of God. Luke, one of our Lord's evangelists, an inspired writer, and the companion of Paul in his labours

or a private Christian comes to the bed-side of a sick and dying friend, he may know little of his real character, and frame of mind, except what he hears from the mouths of others. In that case, he will wish to hear something from his own. His duty and his desire is to speak a word in season to him, and to offer petitions suited to his temper and state. He may on conversing with him, betray an

and travels, is stiled "the beloved physician." In later times, Boerhaave, a famous physician in Holland, was distinguished for his piety. Before he entered on any public business, it is said, he employed an hour in secret prayer. Dr. Stonehouse, of Bristol, was eminently distinguished for evangelical and vital religion; so was Dr. Lobb, of Southampton. Mr. Meikle, of Cornweath, in Scotland, afforded a noble example of piety in the most trying situations; being for a number of years surgeon of a ship of war: his manuscripts (happily discovered) have been published in several volumes;—they contain a rich treasure of religious instruction, and Christian experience, and evince an extensive acquaintance with the scriptures of truth. Many other instances of piety in the medical profession have no doubt occurred, as a Babbington, and a Conquest, &c. &c.; and the pleasing intelligence, has, within a short time been received, that no fewer than eighteen medical students in the college of Edinburgh, have formed themselves into a praying society. What a large prospect of usefulness is thus presented! A pious physician, in his visits to the sick, has an opportunity of doing good, not only to the body, but to the soul of his patient; which he will be cheerfully disposed to embrace and improve. In both respects, he will commend them to the care and blessing of that God who has taken to himself the encouraging and endearing name, "I am the Lord that healeth thee!" Well he knows, that from the same divine hand, the effectual cure of both must ultimately come.

ignorance of himself, a hardness of heart, that demonstrates him to be in "the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity;" or he may discover that ingenuous contrition, and deep humility, that believing dependance on the Saviour, and that affectionate love to him, that filial fear of God, and that lowly subjection of soul to him, as his heavenly Father, that would give his friend reason to look upon him as an heir of God, and joint heir with Jesus Christ: or, after all, he can hear of him, or from him, his character may appear exceeding doubtful, and he may be utterly at a loss to judge whether he has, or has not yet passed from death unto life. And must not every discerning mind that thinks with any degree of seriousness, see the gross impropriety of a person's praying and conversing in the same strain with persons on a sick bed, in such very different conditions? Would not a minister be inexcusably betraying the trust reposed in him, and leading souls blindfold to the borders of eternity, in hurrying over the *same* form with them all, and encouraging the *same* hopes in them all, without so much as knowing any thing of their spiritual state or religious character? And he is still more criminal, if knowing he pays no proper regard to them in those prayers which he presents to God for them in their last moments. Would not a physician be justly despised; who should sit down to prescribe to his patient as soon as he entered his chamber, without examining his case? Would not an apothecary be ashamed to carry the *same* medicine with him in his pocket wherever

he goes, and administer it indiscriminately to all his patients as a cure for every disorder? The application is easy; and as it relates to the soul and eternity, is an absurdity as much more blameable as it is more fatal in its consequences.—But, suppose I know somewhat, and that greatly to the disadvantage of the afflicted, I have heard for instance, that he has been a profane swearer; a drunkard, unjust, or unclean; an enemy to the cross, and the Gospel of Christ; that he has cast off all appearance and profession of religion, and that he restrains prayer, both in private and in public before God; or that while preserving the form of godliness, he most evidently denies the power thereof, shall I dare to encourage his hope? Or to administer to him the consolations of the Gospel, without knowing, or having any good reason to believe that he has been convinced of the iniquity of his sins, and the danger of his state? Ought I not rather, when I see a soul upon the brink of eternity, sleeping the sleep of death, endeavour to rouse him to sensibility and a becoming and necessary concern for his safety? Should I not in faithfulness labour to excite his apprehensions, terrors, and prayers? What meanest thou, O sleeper! Arise and call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon thee, that thou perish not;—rather than sooth and flatter him, and administer opiates to the lethargic.* Such, and so in-

* The laudible practice of visiting the sick, was perhaps never so general as at the present time. In many places, societies of pious and beneficent persons are formed for the purpose. But excellent and beneficial as are such labours of love, there is reason to fear, that the object of them is

judicious is the conduct of those who speak peace to such in death, by addressing them, and praying for them as beloved brethren in Christ; and above all, by administering the Lord's supper to them: especially considering the natural vanity of the heart, and the disposition of sinful creatures to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. Though an alarm be painful, if necessary, let us not weakly (and equally at our own peril, (Ezek. xiii. 10—16,) and that of those with whom we have to do,) dare to withhold it; as such a neglect as well as the flattery above mentioned, is threatened by the

often defeated, by the unskilfulness of some that are deputed as visitors. Being perhaps, young and inexperienced themselves, and knowing how desirable it is to receive *comfort*, they have thought scarcely of any thing but of communicating it to others. This, some who are sick will eagerly catch at, who would not thank them for it, if they were in health and likely to live.—That men should be shown the remedy and blessings of the Gospel is certainly proper; but it is not *less* necessary, that they should be shown their guilt, misery, and danger, which are the disease. Has the sick person any feeling sense of his state by nature, as guilty, condemned, and wretched? Without this conviction, no one ever did, ever will, ever can apply to Christ. Although no good quality is required as a warrant for an application to him, yet without a spiritual conviction of the evil of sin, and of the perishing state of the sinner; it is obvious there can be no *real* sense of our need of the Saviour, nor even the lowest degree of faith in him. Let those then who attend the sick and dying, be cautious, lest they injure those whose good they would promote, by "crying peace, peace, where an alarm ought to be given." "He is very happy, and I have built him up," said one, of a doubtful character. To whom his friend replied, "that is wrong, you ought to have pulled him down."

Almighty himself with very dreadful consequences. (Ezek. iii. 18; xxxiii. 6.) And as to afflicted Christians themselves, even they may need and require very different treatment. Different Christians have different advancements, and experience in the divine life. Nor have they all walked before God with equal degrees of steadiness, comfort, and usefulness. Some have entertained clear and just views of the Gospel, and have lived habitually and long under their animating influence; others seem to know comparatively little of the blessings of that "everlasting covenant which is well ordered in all things and sure." They know but little of the Mediator himself, through whom they are imparted, or of the way and means in which they are obtained. Some have joy and peace in believing, and are strong in faith, giving glory to God; knowing that if their house of this tabernacle were dissolved, they have a building of God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." Others walk in darkness and see no light, but have through fear of death, been all their life time subject to bondage. In a word, the frames, dispositions, and attainments of men's minds, seem as various as the situations and disorders of their bodies: and the former may require as different advice from their ministers and friends, as the latter from their physicians. It would lead me far beyond my present design, nor should I think of attempting to dictate to my brethren what they should say to the sick in the several cases that occur or in what words they should pray for them. All I wish is, to impress on their hearts and my own, a

serious and abiding conviction of the propriety and necessity of visiting them with a conscientious regard to their spiritual welfare: and of attempting it in such ways, and by such means as appear under a divine blessing, most likely to promote it. Administering instruction, caution, admonition or consolation, as the different characters and conditions of the afflicted may *require*.

On the Religious Education of Children.

THE term "*education*," is in some respects vague and indefinite; the subjects of it are widely different from each other. Some are educated in the knowledge of one science, and some of another, according to the particular line of life for which it is intended to qualify them. Whether the genius and taste of a youth incline him to choose a learned profession, or a common trade; whether he prefer to spend his time on the sea, or on the dry ground, are matters of but small importance; but that he be *religiously* educated is of great moment to both his temporal and eternal welfare; for "godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come." But what is *this life* to the next? What is the body to the soul, or time to eternity? And what is it to dispose of children advantageously in the world, and leave them unprepared for death, unprovided for a never-ending existence? That there are, nevertheless, several duties incumbent on reli-

gious parents with respect to their children, distinct from those which are more immediately connected with their immortal interest, must be admitted; but a *religious education* is, of all blessings they can be the instruments of bestowing, the greatest; and religious instruction is, therefore, as a leading and important part of it, the most valuable information they can communicate to them. I say *religious instruction*, because the common methods of education seem to have nothing of God and religion in them. Some *professing* characters, through mistaken views of truth, or from a partial regard to the injunctions of revelation, have thought it improper or needless to give serious instruction to their offspring, and to bring them up in the knowledge and fear of God. I shall therefore prove it to be a Christian duty. Others entertain but low and confused ideas of the manner of performing it. To such, some directions about it may be useful; and as but few Christians are sufficiently attentive to this great work, there is need to enforce it upon all.

Some parents of Christian character have concluded, that because God reserves to himself in a peculiar manner the empire of the heart, and carries on his own work in his own way, they were free from any obligation to do or say any thing, with a view to the conversion of their children. They have thought it quite sufficient to preserve them, as far as might be, from the contamination of the world, to use them to attend to divine ordinances, &c. Others, professing high regard to the doc-

trines of grace, have refused to teach their children to pray, or to use a form of sound words, lest they should make them pharisees and hypocrites; and by wrong and abusive notions of electing grace, have systematically declined all means of pious instruction.

Wherever such notions prevail, they cannot fail in their operation to weaken, if not to paralyze parental exertions. By an attentive observer of the interior of such a family, their influence will be distinctly traced. The hearts and the habits of the rising generation will not be watched with due solicitude; evils will not be checked, nor promising appearances cherished with that wakeful and unremitting anxiety, which the incalculable importance of education demands. Nature, with its corruptions, will be allowed to gather strength, till the little victims of this false system contract a most pernicious and fatal habit of learning and repeating religious truths with indifference, and sometimes perhaps in nearly as bad a state of mind as the offspring of profane and unprofessing parents. That such parents have adopted partial and erroneous views of religious truth, who can doubt? God is, indeed, in the strictest sense, the giver of all good, both in the natural and spiritual world: but in both he employs means to effect his designs; and the well-directed efforts of his creatures form a most important branch of those means.

“We do not affirm that any form of discipline, the wisest and best in the power of the wisest and best of men to apply, is competent of itself to sub-

ject the mind to the power of religion. On the contrary, we believe that grand effect can be accomplished only by a special influence of the Divine Being operating by the means applied in a well judged system of instruction, or, if he pleases, without it. But next we have to say, that it is perfectly certain, notwithstanding, that the application of these human means will, in a multitude of instances, be efficacious to that most happy effect. Accordingly, there are in the Divine Revelation very many explicit and animating assurances that their exertions shall certainly be in a measure successful in the highest sense of the word. And if these assurances are made in favour of the exertions for inculcating religion generally, that is, on men of all conditions and ages, they may be assumed as applying in a special manner to those for impressing it on young minds, before they can be preoccupied and hardened by the depravities of the world. Their being so assumed would be justified on the ground of reason. But happily, besides, the authority itself which has assured a measure of success to religious instruction as administered generally, has marked with peculiar strength the promise of its success when applied to the young; thus affording rays of hope, which have in ten thousand instances animated the diligence of pious parents, and the other benevolent instructors of children.*

That it is the duty of Christians *religiously* to educate their children, is abundantly evident from the command of God. This is repeatedly expressed in

* Foster's Essays on the Evils of Popular Ignorance, p. 371.

the most solemn injunctions in both the Old and New Testaments. "He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, that the generations to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." (Psalm lxxviii. 7.) And again, "These words," saith he, "which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."* (Deut. vi. 6, 7, and iv. 9, 10.) In the New Testament also, believing parents are expressly enjoined "to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. vi. 4.) The duty thus plainly enforced, might, one would suppose, (did not so many examples appear to the contrary) receive sufficient

* It is to the neglect of such information that we are to attribute the narrowness and weakness of some good men, whether preachers or hearers. It is this contractedness of mind, and comparative poverty of intellect, that induces men to confine their whole attention to some one or two favourite topics of theology, to the almost entire exclusion of others, of no less importance in the great scheme of sacred truth. To speak of the excellent utility of Sunday-Schools, and their direct tendency to counteract the above-mentioned evil, or to add any thing in commendation of such an institution, is only to say, (what every body knows,) that the best benefactors are the greatest blessings to society.

enforcement from the natural affection which parents bear towards their children. With regard to the present world, we plainly observe how powerfully these principles operate. In order that children may enjoy the comforts and advantages of a mortal life, they will labour and toil both day and night; yea, some persons are so engaged in providing fortunes for their children, that they have no time to spare for the purpose of bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But can any thing be so inconsistent, so monstrously absurd, as for a parent 'professing religion, who believes his children have immortal souls, and that they must live for ever in happiness or in woe, to make it his principal care to fit them for, and put them in possession of this mortal state, this uncertain life, to the neglect of future and eternal realities?—It is the duty of parents to make a provision for their children, sufficient if they can, to enable them by honest industry,* or some liberal

* "Habitual indolence, or the want of useful occupation, has been productive of much mischief. Idleness is, without doubt, the seed plot of evil. It is the soil most favourable to the infernal agriculturist, who avails himself of every opportunity of diffusing his pernicious influence, and going about "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." It has been well observed, that "an industrious man may be tempted of the devil; but an idle one actually tempts the devil to tempt him. He solicits, he courts the baneful presence of the arch destroyer. It would effectually banish gloom, and preclude lassitude, to propose to ourselves some laudable and important object, and to pursue it with vigorous activity. For what is life, divested of its pursuits, its duties, its utilities?—A mere shadow, an in-

profession, to support themselves, and be useful members of society; but with regard to what may properly be called a provision, reason, not fashion must determine. When persons who were born to no estate, think it incumbent on them to amass wealth sufficient to raise their children above the need of any employment or profession, scanty must

apid vapour, a gloomy blank, yea, an insufferable load. He who is habitually unoccupied, will find that his life sinks into a dull sameness, relieved by no breaks, interspersed with no varieties. This uninteresting mode of existence is regarded first with indifference, then follows fatigue, then restlessness, then disgust, then death."—See an excellent sermon on the subject of suicide, preached before the Monthly Association of Ministers and Churches, by the Rev. G. Clayton. Such a discourse as the above ought (in my opinion) to be read in schools, especially to the senior scholars, once or twice in every year. This practice might prove a powerful preventive to evil, and an extensive blessing to the nation. Youth would notice and remember those arguments which they do not at present need; although even youthful existence, without some object of pursuit, is frequently found to be wearisome and almost undesirable.

"Time's use was doom'd a pleasure; waste, a pain,
That man might *feel* his error, if unseen;
And feeling, fly to labour for his cure:
Not blundering, split on idleness, for ease.

————— If time past,
And time possess'd, both pain us, what can please?
That which the Deity to please ordain'd—
Time used. The man who consecrates his hours
By vigorous effort, and an honest aim,
At once he draws the sting of life and death:
He walks with nature, and her paths are peace."

Dr. Young, Night II.

be their charities, and strong their love of money. So far is opulence from being any real benefit to children, that (a few instances excepted) it proves a corrupter of their hearts, or provider to their lusts, too frequently fixing them to habits of vanity, extravagance, and luxury.

Whatever the temporal circumstances of children may be in this sinful world, their moral condition, as the subjects of a depraved nature, and as exposed to the most alarming dangers, loudly calls upon parents to be solicitous for their salvation. Their case demands compassion, for they are wholly distempered. How much grief, anger, and vexation do they feel, even in their very childhood, from their natural stubbornness, envy, pride, and selfishness? And do you not know what these disorders portend? What greater troubles, what severer conflicts, what more frequent vexations await them as their certain portion, unless the strength of these baleful passions is subdued? Are you not conscious what latent seeds of various lusts are to be found in their hearts, which will ripen by time, and occasion too a terrible harvest of corruption, unless prevented by you.* Can you think of this, and be negligent or dilatory in commending

* Man, in his fallen state, is so constituted, that there is not one natural passion, however useful, and however excellent it may be when properly regulated, which does not become an occasion of sin, and require to be resisted and mortified. Almost all the evils and miseries in the world may be traced up to the depraved passions of mankind. Hence St. Paul gives a summary of all sin under two terms:

them to the great physician of souls, and teaching them how much they need, and ought to seek for

“the lusts of the *flesh* and of the *mind*.” (Eph. ii. 3.) The former of these impulses, though necessary for the propagation of mankind, will prove (unless constantly restrained) a seducer of the soul into much sin, and cause the most extensive evil. At the instigation of inordinate, sinful lusts, what time, what parts, what influence, are daily prostituted! Men of the finest sense, and best education, for the poor perishing gratification of an hour, will be guilty of what is shocking to every mind that retains the least fear of God, or compassion for their fellow creatures: guilty of bringing a heedless female to indelible shame, her parents to grief, as tormenting as it is unavailing, inevitable, and hopeless. This, with a train of evils, too numerous and various to be traced, and too shocking to be even contemplated without pain and grief. Instead, therefore, of saying, (as libertines impudently speak,) “Where is the harm of taking a little pleasure out of the way?” you will perceive that thieves and robbers are harmless, compared with the lewd. Injuries from these open foes have very soon an end, in most instances are borne with ease, and may be redressed: they do not strike at our immortal interest; they do not ruin our children; they do not degrade our families. We cannot wonder that this sin is so constantly mentioned, and marked in Scripture as the object of God’s displeasure, when we consider how dishonourable it is to him, and how exceeding injurious to his reasonable creatures.—Next to this, and often connected with it, are the moral disorders of the mind. From these flow bitterness and wrath, anger and clamour, and sometimes dreadful murders. This is “spiritual wickedness in high places.” Nor are these, with the before-mentioned great evils, to be conquered and cast out, but by the omnipotent power of divine grace; and even when their dominion is broken, a Christian will find need enough for the exercise of constant prayer and watchfulness.

his power to heal them? And do you ask what can I do to prevent these evils, and to promote the present and future welfare of my children? I answer,

1st. Converse with them freely, faithfully, and frequently. This is prescribed by God himself, in the passage above cited.* This injunction imposes a task equally pleasant to the parent and the child. Nothing can more gratify a child than to hear his parent familiarly narrate to him, in language level to his capacity and comprehension, the interesting facts of the Old and New Testaments. The child who has been accustomed to this mode of instruction, will as naturally look for the repetition of some interesting tale when walking by his parents' side, or when sitting occupied in the house, as he will for his daily food. Children are too frequently heedless and inattentive, when sermons are read or preached to them; but there is something in a free conversation which generally engages the attention, fixes roving minds, and insinuates into them instruction, reproof, and encouragement, more powerfully than any other method. Thus an opportunity offers of making them acquainted with the most important things, at a very early age, and of associating these with pleasurable emotions, which will tend to render such things interesting through the whole of future life. Be prevailed upon, then, ye parents, by your love to Christ, and the souls of your children, to set up this practice immediately.

* See page 330.

if you have never adopted it, and to revive it, if, through any temptation, it have been discontinued.

2dly. The memories of children should be furnished with religious truths. If moral and religious sentiments are not laid up in the memory, useless and pernicious thoughts will occupy it. It will require but very little effort on the part of a child, and it will not interfere with the other branches of his learning, to commit one short portion of the sacred text to memory every day. If this plan be persevered in for several years, though each day's accession be but small, the collective stock laid upon the mind will be large and highly beneficial. Select pieces of sacred poetry, adapted to the age and capacity of the child, should also be committed to memory. And for the same purpose, it is highly important to catechise; a practice to which our pious forefathers very scrupulously attended; and which, if it be at the present in some measure neglected, must prove to the disadvantage of the rising generation. By these various means, aim at furnishing the mind with a fund of religious knowledge, which, under the divine blessing, may be of eminent service to your children, and to their children after them, to the end of their mortal existence.*

* Were this course universally pursued in training children, I believe we should find but few Socinian *professors* of Christianity, and perhaps as few Antinomians. The self-righteousness of the one, and the licentiousness of the other, would be both precluded, at least in theory, by a correct view of Scripture doctrines. Other gross mistakes

3dly. You should vigilantly guard your children from those influences which may counteract your own efforts. It will be of little use for the husbandman to prepare the soil, and scatter the precious seed upon it, if he is regardless of his fences, and permits his fields to be trampled on and destroyed by every animal which may chance to stray over them. And it will be very little to the purpose that you instruct, impress, and discipline your rising family, if you do not protect them from the injuries to which they are constantly exposed.*

there are in the world upon religious subjects; but these errors relate to others, rather than to the persons who hold them, and are therefore far less dangerous in their future results. How a person can be an humble, sincere Christian, who differs from me respecting unconditional election, &c., I can easily conceive, especially if he be in the novitiate of his religious experience; but how a man can be in a state of grace and salvation, who rejects the doctrine of the Saviour's proper divinity and vicarious atonement, or how that professor of Christianity can be saved who is not concerned to be sanctified, I cannot conceive, without rejecting at once the testimony of Revelation, reason, and experience. Let children, then, be well grounded in the Scripture doctrine of human depravity and sinfulness, and in the absolute necessity of an infinite atonement for sin, an all-perfect righteousness to justify, and almighty grace to sanctify,—and common sense will give them a sound *creed*, whatever the present state of their hearts may be.

* All bad company is in this respect formidable; but that is most evidently so, which is to be found at home. Great care ought therefore to be taken, that you admit none into your families who may debauch the tender minds of your children by pernicious opinions, or by vicious practices. This is a caution which should be particularly remembered

Not a few, I imagine, have cried on this head; and have had the grief and mortification, after many pleasing hopes, of seeing all their labours prove abortive.

Let me caution you to be careful what books your children peruse. Never suffer a book to be put into their hands without knowing its contents yourself. Some books disseminate the principles of infidelity; others aim at corrupting the feelings of the heart.* Such books should be prohibited;

in the case of servants. Take heed you do not bring into your families such as may diffuse infection through the souls of your dear offspring. It is a thousand times better to put up with some inconveniences and disadvantages, when you have reason to believe a servant fears God, and will, from a principle of obedience, be faithful in watching over your children, and in seconding your religious care in their education; than to prefer such, as while they are perhaps managing your temporal affairs something better, may pervert your children to the service of the devil. I fear some parents little think how much mischief these base creatures are doing. And it is very possible, that if some of you recollect what you have observed amongst the companions of your childhood, you may find instances of this nature, which ripen years have not since given you opportunity to discover. Again, if you send your children to places of education, be greatly cautious in your choice of them. Dearly will you purchase the greatest advantages of learning, at the expence of those of a religious nature. And I will turn out of my way to add, that school masters and tutors will have a dreadful account to give, if they are not faithful and tenderly solicitous for the souls of those committed to their care.—*Dr. Doddridge's Sermons on the Religious Education of Children*, p. 98.

* The unhappy influence of these publications which

or if valuable matter should be mixed with objectionable passages, they should be perused under the judicious eye of a parent, who will be able to point out the errors, and guard against them.*

tend to weaken and relax the moral principles of the youth in the community, is manifest in a great variety of instances, but in nothing more obvious than in the infidel bias which they impart to the general operation of the mental powers, and the awful consequences of that bias, when adverse events agitate the mind, and damp the ardour of expectation.

"Thus often unbelief grows sick of life,
Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife:
The jury meet,—the coroner is short,
And 'lunacy,' the verdict of the court.
Reverse the sentence; let the truth be known:
Such lunacy is (unbelief) alone."

Cowper's Truth.

* "As to that class of books denominated novels," says Mr. James, "I join with every other moral and religious writer in condemning, as the vilest trash, the greater part of the productions which, under this name, have carried a turbid stream of vice over the morals of mankind. They corrupt the taste, pollute the heart, debase the mind, demoralise the conduct. They throw prostrate the understanding, sensualise the affections, enervate the will, and bring all the faculties of the soul into subjection to an imagination which they first made wild, insane, and uncontrollable. They furnish no ideas, and generate a morbid, sickly sentimentalism, instead of a just and lovely sensibility. A wise man should despise them, and a good man should abhor them."—*The Christian Father's Present to his Children*. By the Rev. J. A. James, p. 193.

This excellent work needs no commendation to those pious families who have read it, and I cannot recommend it with sufficient warmth to those who have not.

Be careful into what company your children are introduced. There is scarce any step in life of more serious consequence than the choice of companions. By an imprudent association of this kind, the care, and expence, and anxieties of perhaps near twenty years, have been defeated, and the fairest hopes have been extinguished. You should not be satisfied with the consideration, that the youth who seeks the acquaintance of your child belongs to a respectable family, or even to a religious family; you should make it an indispensable qualification that he himself be possessed of good dispositions. Let no consideration tempt you to relax your prohibitions, where you judge it necessary to issue them. There will not be much difficulty, I presume, in guarding against such connections, if parents study to make home agreeable to their children. Let them be happy in the company of their best friends and guardians, and they will prefer their society to every other, and especially to immoral and dangerous companions.

Be cautious what amusements your children are permitted to seek. If various amusements are objectionable on the ground of their immoral tendency, how is it possible that a religious parent can suffer his children to indulge in them? If you permit your child to attend a vicious theatre,* or to amuse

* Archbishop Tillotson observes, that "the exhibitions of the theatre are as much the ordinance of Satan for the damnation of souls, as the instituted means of religion are appointed of God for the salvation of them."

ciate with such company as may be met with upon the race ground, and other places of public entertainment, you must indeed expect miracles, if you think he will be virtuous and pious.

Finally. Be careful in what families you place your children, when they leave the parental roof. It will be necessary for them in many instances to leave their father's house. In such cases, what should be the first and great concern? Surely, not to secure merely secular objects; but, in connection with these, to provide for their moral and religious improvement. In too many instances, where the former have been exclusively or principally provided for, the latter have been sacrificed, and a permanent injury has been sustained. Exercise a *particular* care in the disposal of your children in the world; and when you choose employments for them, by all means place them in religious families, where the great God is served and worshipped. This is the most likely way for them to become religious and holy. If they are fixed in religious families, they will enjoy many spiritual advantages in them. Here they will be instructed in the doctrines and duties of Christianity; they will have many seasonable counsels and exhortations directed to them; they will escape many snares and temptations common in other families, where the heads of them do not fear God; they will see religion recommended by good examples; and give me leave to add, that God has often made the pious heads of families happy instruments of leading young persons into a saving acquaintance with divine things.

But, on the other hand, what manifold disadvantages attend the fixing young persons in irreligious and profane families. Here God is not owned and worshipped, and the youth in them are educated in practical atheism. Young persons in irreligious families have not only been brought up in ignorance of God, but in many families they have had wicked prejudices instilled into them against the good ways of God; here they have seen many examples of sin and vice, which they have afterwards imitated all their life long, to the ruin of both body and soul.*

If, then, ye that are parents would not be accessory to the destruction of your children,—if you would be *indeed* a blessing to them, and, under God, the instruments of their salvation; converse often with them about matters of infinite and everlasting moment; lead them by your examples to prayer, reading, and other religious duties; inform their understandings, store their memories, rectify their wills, quicken their affections, keep tender

* The above serious considerations may be sufficient to caution professing parents against so prevailing an evil, and others connected with it; and also to point out, to them, so glaring an inconsistency, as even the children themselves are sometimes capable of perceiving. I have read of a youth whose father had placed him in a wealthy situation, in a family which was very worldly and gay. The youth sometimes would go and see his parents, and his father would pray very fervently for him, that he might be preserved from the temptations of his situation. The young man saw the inconsistency of the father's conduct, and said, "My father has placed me in the devil's mouth, and now he is praying that he may not swallow me."

their consciences, restrain their tongues, and teach them gracious speech; reform and watch over their outward conversation. To these ends get them Bibles, and pious books, and see that they read them. Examine them often in what they learn; spend a part of the Lord's day in this work; and suffer them not to spend it in sports and idleness. Show them the meaning of what they read, or learn; keep them out of evil company, and acquaint them with the godly. Especially show them the necessity, excellence, and pleasure of serving God, and labour to fix all upon their hearts. "Be not satisfied with making them read a lesson, or repeat a prayer. By every thing tender and solemn in religion, by a due admixture of the awful considerations drawn from the prospect of death and judgment, with others of a more pleasing nature, aim to fix serious impressions on their hearts. Aim to produce a religious concern; carefully watch its progress, and endeavour to conduct it to a proper issue. Lead them to the footstool of the Saviour, teach them to rely, as guilty creatures, on his merit alone, and to commit their eternal interest entirely into his hands. Let the salvation of *your* children be the object, to which every word of your instructions, every exertion of your authority is directed. Despise the profane clamour which would deter you from attempting to render them serious, from an apprehension of making them melancholy; not doubting for a moment, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that the path to true happiness lies through purity, humility, and devo-

tion. Meditate the worth of their souls : meditate deeply the lessons the Scripture affords on their inconceivable value and eternal duration. While the philosopher wearies himself with endless speculations on their physical properties and nature ; while the politician only contemplates the social arrangements of mankind, and the trifling forms of policy ; fix your attention on the individual importance of man as the creature of God, and as a candidate for immortality. Let your highest ambition be to train up your children for an unchanging condition of being. Spare no pains to recover them to the image of God ; render familiar to their minds, in all its extent, the various branches of that holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Inculcate the obligation, and endeavour to inspire the love of that rectitude, that eternal rectitude, which was with God before time began, was embodied in the person of his Son, and in its lower communications, will survive every thing sublunary, emerge in the dissolution of all things, and be impressed in refulgent characters, in the new heavens and the new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness. Pray often with them, and for them, and remind them of the inconceivable advantages attached to that exercise. Accustom them to a punctual and reverential attendance at the house of God ; insist on their sanctification of the sabbath, by such a disposal of time as is suited to a day of rest and devotion. Survey them with a vigilant and tender eye, checking every appearance of an evil and depraved disposition the moment it springs up, and encouraging

the dawn of piety and virtue. By thus training them up in the way they should go, you may reasonably hope* that when old they will not depart from it."†

On the Duty of Servants, Masters, &c.

IF we contemplate mankind as the creatures of God, and for a moment abstract our thoughts from their fallen state, we shall perceive that there is no real difference in their social, any more than in their moral condition. But considering them as

* What the pious Mr. Newton writes of himself affords great encouragement to every pious parent, to persevere amidst difficulties, and to hope, even where no fruit of their exertions at present appears. "How far (says he,) the best education may fall short of teaching the heart, will strongly appear in the sequel of my history: yet, I think, for the encouragement of pious parents to go on in the good way, of doing *their part* faithfully to form their children's minds, I may properly propose myself as an instance. Though in process of time, I sinned away all the advantages of those early impressions, yet they were for a great while a restraint upon me; they returned again and again, and it was very long before I could wholly shake them off; and when the Lord at length opened my eyes, I found a great benefit from the recollection of them. Further, my dear mother, besides the pains she took with me, often commended me with many prayers and tears to God, and I doubt not but I reap the fruit of these prayers to this hour."—*Authentic Narrative, Letter 2.*

† Rev. R. Hall's Sermon on the advantages of knowledge to the lower classes, p. 22.

the inhabitants of a fallen and disordered world, we shall easily see both the grounds and necessity of those distinctions which we every where observe in civil society. Subordination being now necessary to the order and comfort of mankind, the wisdom and goodness of God are clearly manifested in the ordination of it. On this circumstance it is, that all may enjoy an equal share of real happiness, and each his respective opportunity to exercise, communicate, and receive the various reciprocal duties and charities of human life.

"It is the ordinance of God that there should be servants. There is no infringement of personal liberty in the recognition of masters. And this too, "masters according to the flesh," arises out of the constitution of society, and is essential to its organization. While the expression limits the obedience, and shows that it extends only to the social comfort, and that it must not in any instance be carried to the evasion of the rights of conscience, or to the infringements of the superior duties due from the individual to the creator." When, therefore, servants are required to be "obedient in all things," the expression must plainly be considered as including only those things that are lawful; or in other words, those things that are consistent with the revealed will of God. If any servant be required by a master to do any thing that was contrary to that will, compliance in this case would be manifestly sinful. But here, observe, that the same rule is equally applicable to all other relations in social life.

With this exception, servants are called to be "obedient in all things, with all good fidelity." This admonition must be considered as having a direct respect to the master's property. Every species of theft is thus pointedly condemned. But they are also guarded against *purloining*. This expression seems to regard those little interferences with the property of a master, which may be very common, and therefore, little thought of, but which a conscientious servant will carefully avoid. This, indeed, is a part of their character as Christians. Good fidelity on the part of servants is shown, by paying attention to that part of their master's property which is committed to their trust. If by carelessness, for example, they injure or destroy articles of food or furniture, which a little attention would have prevented, they are certainly blamable for not showing that regard to their master's interest, which a respect to the divine authority plainly requires.

Christian servants will recollect, that their time is the property of the family in whose service they are engaged. If a large portion of it is spent in idleness, or foolish talking with their companions, when they occasionally meet, which may often prove extremely inconvenient to the family they serve, they are not serving with all good fidelity.

The same charge is applicable to those who do not pay attention to the directions given respecting any piece of work in which they are employed. Inattention on the part of a servant or an apprentice, shows a want of interest in the comfort and

prosperity of a master. Now the Scriptures enjoin upon servants to do what they require "*from the heart.*" They are to guard against being men-pleasers, and merely giving eye-service. These expressions refer to those who seem very busy at their work when the eye of a master is over them, but who become careless and remiss when he is gone. Such persons show that they are not anxious to please God. But the Apostle not only speaks of the outward conduct of servants, but also of the temper they are called to manifest. With good will they are to do service; that is, not in a grudging manner; not as if dissatisfied with the situation in which providence has placed them. "Not with the terrors natural to a slave, who is exposed to personal violence: nor with the apprehension which destroys confidence, dissolves attachment, eradicates cheerfulness, and substitutes force for affection: but with that quick sense of duty and propriety which renders you alive to every obligation, and anxious to discharge your duty in a way consistent with your engagements: and from the still higher principle of religion, lest, as Christian servants, you should bring any reproach upon the Gospel by your negligence or inconsistency. This mental bond is stronger than any mere relative tie: it is also a respect as becoming your station, as it is honourable to your Christianity. That service will never be well performed, which is not so regulated. Submission, which religion demands no less than society, will exclude all approaches to impertinence. Against this the Apostle urges a distinct charge:

"Not answering again." There is, on the part of some servants, a flippancy of tongue, which destroys every other quality, however amiable, and by disquieting the family, renders their residence in it for any length of time, impossible. Pert speech and unbridled passions are alike incompatible with domestic order and family tranquillity; those who indulge them will never be respected, even while they are endured for the sake of their services; and must expect to be laid aside without pity, where they are no longer necessary. They excite no esteem,—they will receive no gratitude. There is another impertinence, equally opposite to submission, and still more disgusting than speech; which consists in a cool, deliberate, insolent adherence to that which has been expressly forbidden, or negligence to that which has been strictly enjoined. No answer is made: but no respect is paid to the orders of the heads of the family. This is a contemptuous treatment of authority, which goes beyond impertinence, and argues malignity, which outrages more than passion, and wants its apology; which tramples upon all the decencies of life, while it sets at defiance the first principles and the plainest precepts of religion.*

It is the duty of servants patiently to bear reproof. The pride of human nature rises with eagerness in self-vindication, and is backward to own itself deserving of blame. From this spirit, servants are apt to impute the admonitions they receive, to

* Rev. Dr. Collyer's Lectures on Scripture Duties, p. 259.

ill-nature, or peevishness in their superiors; and if they bear without a visible contempt, what is said, they look upon themselves at liberty to pay no more regard to it, than is necessary to keep their place, if it is a profitable one. But no servant who receives the word of God, can habitually act in this inconsistent manner. It is expressly required of them to adorn the Gospel of God our Saviour in all things; but if they show themselves deaf to just admonition, and hardened against reasonable remonstrances, they utterly disgrace their holy profession, and make their sincerity doubtful, and even their religious pretences contemptible. Besides, if they are not ready to acknowledge their faults, and will not patiently bear to be reprov'd for them, they must be void of humility, without which no man or woman can possibly belong to Christ. The want of this distinguishing Christian virtue, at least that degree of it which is suitable to the circumstances of servants, is the parent of most, if not of all their inconsistencies, in speech, dress, and behaviour in general.* And these evils are the more painful, and to

* Simplicity of manners and of dress is a graceful accomplishment of respectable servitude; and in the present day, a quality beyond all price. An affectation of speech and of personal decoration beyond the station is excessively ridiculous; and one might be disposed to laugh at its folly, if pity and humanity did not require that we should weep at its consequences. Now, the distinction of rank and fortune must be plainness, for the fashions, and to their extremes, descend instantly into our kitchens, as they are imported into our own country. Wages alone become an object, and servants are perpetually changing places, as higher ranks may

be deplored, on account of the opportunity which Christian servants have of "adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour." They have often an opportunity of recommending religion to the families in which they are placed. We have known the consistent conduct of a Christian servant remove prejudices against a Christian profession where they were formerly entertained. As an encouragement to Christian servants, allow me to mention a pleasing instance of a signal blessing accompanying the consistent conduct of a maid servant, who was placed by providence in a family, the members of which, when she entered into it, were strangers to the influence of true religion. Several young ladies were the objects of her charge. Frequently in the evening she proposed to read to them, when they were retiring to rest, a portion of the word of God; and though they had no taste for such an employment, as she was a great favourite with the family, on account of

be obtained, to support this extravagance of dress. No attention whatever is paid to respectability of station; to ease and comfort; to moral privileges; every thing must yield to vain indulgence. Accordingly, a servant of a year standing in a place, must be almost considered a prodigy; and if it extend to two, it is a proper subject for an advertisement, as a recommendation to another place of higher emoluments. No provision is made for age, for sickness, for accidents; no foundation is laid for family esteem; for the excitement of that kind feeling which cannot but regard an old servant as an humble friend, and makes it a duty to find some provision at last for services expended in one family. All must be sacrificed to this silly extravagance!—*Dr. Collyer's Lectures on Scripture Duties.*

her uniform amiable temper, and accommodating manners, they were willing to listen to her.* For a long time they heard what she read with much indifference; at last however, she was taken ill, and died in the family, eminently supported by the faith of the Gospel, and animated by the hope of eternal life.

The wonderful consolation she experienced on her death bed, recalled to the recollection of her young ladies, after she was gone, the truths she used to read to them from the word of God. They then began to see the vast importance of these truths; and from one step to another, the greater part of a formerly gay and thoughtless family, embraced the Gospel, and were eminently distinguished for living under its influence. What a fullness of holy joy is thus prepared for this honourable maid servant at the resurrection of the just, when she shall not only meet before the throne, those to whom she was more immediately useful by her active services in life, and especially by her exemplary death; but all who in every age, even to the remotest period, derived spiritual benefit through her original instrumentality! Here I cannot but notice the high incitement, to use the most unremitting exertions to do good to the souls of others, derived from the inconceivable

* Many opportunities arise, in which Christians might communicate the knowledge of Christ to their neighbours; those in a state of servitude to their fellow servants, and, provided it were done on proper occasions, and according to the apostolic rule, in meekness and fear, persons in inferior stations might suggest a useful hint even to their superiors.

extent of the happiness that may be produced. Thus one man leads another to the knowledge of the Gospel. He in his turn endeavours to be useful to others. Each of these, in like manner, pursues the same course of benevolence; so that from the exertions of a single individual, a stream of human happiness flows, which, like the recorded waters of the sanctuary, becomes gradually broader and deeper, till, like a mighty river, it rolls on with increasing majesty, and with a force which nothing can resist, and constantly receiving fresh accessions till the great final day.

Before I conclude the present essay, I would advert to those duties which arise from the higher relations to servants and inferiors, and which both reason and scripture abundantly inculcate. Masters and mistresses are called "to give to their servants that which is just and equal." This is usually a matter of direct stipulation in such a country as this. But there are various ways in which the spirit of christianity will manifest itself in this relation, which cannot easily perhaps be particularly specified in the original terms of agreement. It is unquestionably incumbent on all heads of families, who make any religious profession, to pay attention to the comfort and health of their servants, not to require of them more than their strength is equal to, in the way of service; and when reproof becomes necessary, to reprove them in a temper becoming the Gospel. I have often felt much disgusted at seeing servants, when they had neglected some part of their duty, reprov'd, perhaps with as much severity as if they

had committed some deliberate crime. No doubt the neglect of duty is blameworthy, and deserves a certain measure of reproof. But here the practical tendency of correct Christian feeling should appear. The recollection of our own proneness to neglect the duties we owe to our master in heaven, ought at least to temper the reproof we have occasion to give to those who have omitted part of the duties they owe to us. "I owe to my servants," (says the elegant writer before quoted,) "not merely justice, but also gentleness. I am a master; this is the station in which the providence of God has placed me; but I have no right to be a tyrant;—this is the assumption of authority, and an abuse of power which he has never sanctioned. I could ill tolerate it in others; I can have no right to exercise it myself. A haughty deportment is void of true dignity: I owe it to myself, not to give my servant an advantage over me in his estimation of my character. He will scan it, and possibly unjustly; his want of education, of knowledge, of that penetration which alone can read character, by an accurate and extensive acquaintance with men and things, may induce on his part a false judgment, and his conclusion will be drawn with rashness commensurate with his ignorance: but I will not add to his error, by a demeanor unbecoming my station, and my real superiority, which consists alone in knowledge, and ought to govern my conduct. Violence is as wicked as it is weak; it is an ebullition of passion without power; it is as ineffectual as it is degrading and contemptible. Severity is unjust, because we could not bear

its application to ourselves. To visit every offence to its full measure; to make it a principle not to overlook a fault, or to forget an insult; to consider every crime as ever inadmissible, places us in an awful situation, where we are reminded, that our "master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him." And if he so dealt with us, who could stand? The exercises of moderation, becomes the man and the Christian. We have no right to expect every virtue from our servants. Those who seek perfection should themselves exhibit it: this is the least that can be required of men enjoying all the advantages of birth and education, if it is to be demanded of those who confessedly want both the one and the other. Our expectations ought to be brought within a reasonable limit; and we should make allowances for foibles of which we are not ourselves unconscious. To be a good master, a man should be well acquainted with human nature, as well as with religious principle, that he may know what to expect and what to forgive."*

But there is one point more, (and which is of prime importance) to which I would call your attention, on the supposition you profess to be influenced by the fear and love of God. It is your obligation to endeavour to promote the best interest of the souls of your servants. We are commanded to do good to all as we have opportunity. Now, if the heads of families have a certain degree of influence over their servants, from the relation in which they stand

* Dr. Collyer's Lectures on Scripture Duties.

to them ; if they have many opportunities from that relation of doing them good—of endeavouring to lead their attention to those truths, without which, as immortal beings, they can never be happy, are they not placed under the most indispensable obligations, sedulously to employ that influence, and to improve these opportunities, in endeavouring to promote their *eternal* good ? * “The individual,” says

* I trust I shall be excused, if I may not by some be commended; for introducing here the just, though painful remark of a pious writer. “Go,” says he, “to what part of the kingdom we may, we meet with a general complaint of bad servants; and the subject too often forms the basis of conversation for hours together. It is a lamentable fact, that servants are indeed bad; and I presume, that their unfaithfulness, dishonesty, and pride, may be accounted for on the same principles as the wickedness of children; and may be resolved into that almost entire neglect of their manners and morals, their bodies and souls, which so generally prevails in families called Christian. Never do I expect to see a better race of servants till domestic discipline be revived, and they are permitted to share in its benefits. Were that time, which is spent in scolding them for their errors, and conversing about their perverseness, employed in cultivating their minds, and imparting to them religious instruction, the desired object would be much more certainly obtained. But from the manner in which servants are treated, we should infer that they are without souls; for in some families where there is an outward attention to social worship and discipline, the servants are entirely excluded, or at most, called in but once a week. Let those who have servants recollect, that they are committed to their care, that they are to share in the privileges of worship, and other branches of domestic discipline, and that God will most certainly punish the neglect of these, either by giving up servants to more dreadful

Dr. Collyer, "who lives under my roof is, for the time being, a member of my family; and I am its master. I cannot command success: but I am bound to use the means. As that servant comes to me voluntarily, I ought to stipulate that he shall conform to my family regulations. I am not infringing upon his liberty; he is free to enter my service, or to refuse it: he is also free at any time of his servitude to resign it. But I have also a responsibility: not merely as an individual, but as the father and the master of the family. I ought to require his attendance upon public and social worship. I also am free to choose between a servant who shall conform to my domestic habits, and my sense of duty, and one who would be reluctant to fall in with them. It is not enough that I give opportunities of religious worship; I must see that they avail themselves of these. On this ground, and not to support a party spirit, I expect they should attend to the same place of worship with myself: simply because I have otherwise no certainty that they attend any:—because the grossest abuses have arisen out of the most ample privileges:—because I ought to be acquainted with the actual conduct of my family. God forbid that I should for one moment invade the rights of private judgment! give me a servant upon whom I can really depend for a conscientious difference of opinion with me in matters of religion, as to externals; and I would not for a moment infringe depravity still, or in some other more signal manner."—*Tyerman.*

the claims of conscience. But I must be absolutely certain of this, otherwise my duty is clear. So long as they are under my roof, I must place them within the circle of my privileges: if they have no preference, they must worship under my eye: if they have a preference, I must be certain that it is so; that they really avail themselves of the liberty to go to their own sanctuary; and that my indulgence is not abused. My responsibility to God, rightly understood, and solemnly felt, will superintend regulations in my family, not merely to its domestic order and comfort, but to its spirituality."*

* Eleazor, Count of Arian, who lived in the 14th century, was a noble example of determined regularity and order in his household. His orders and prohibitions were not given out in the tone of taxes and cold advice; but like the plots monarch's, enforced with uniformity, and required with that authority which was suited to his rank.

"I cannot," said he, "allow blasphemy in my house, nor any thing in word or deed which offends the laws of decorum. Dice and all games of hazard are to be prohibited. Let all persons in my house divert themselves at proper times; but not in a sinful manner. In the morning, reading and prayer must be attended to. Let there be content and peace in my family; otherwise two armies are formed under my roof, and the master is devoured by them both. If any difference arise, let not the sun go down upon your wrath. We must bear with something if we have to live among mankind. Such is our family; we are scarcely in tune with ourselves a whole day; and if a melancholy humour comes on us, we know not well what we would have. Not to bear and not to forgive is diabolical; to love enemies, and to do good for evil, is the mark of the children of God. Every evening, all the family shall be assembled at a godly conference; in which they shall hear something of God and salvation. Let none

We should remember that beside prayer in our houses, we have other endeavours to use, for the salvation of those that live with us. We mock God by praying for the conversion of children and servants, if we do not otherwise strive to effect it; if we do not endeavour to convince them of their sin, and of their need of Christ and his grace; if we do not put them in mind of the uncertainty of this life, and of the certain account they must give to God of all their time and talents. And yet this neglect is now so common, that they are reckoned good parents, and good masters, who will even give their children and servants leave to go to heaven without them; who will not hinder their inferiors from serving God. Whereas we have much to do of *positive* duty—To inform their minds, to furnish their memories, to watch over their behaviour, to teach them to reverence the Scriptures, and delight in the ordinances of God—And let children and servants take heed to their carriage towards each other. Let them endeavour after concord, union, and love, and avoid contention and falling out, and the use of provoking, exasperating language, on any account. Let them help one another as they can, in health and sickness; tenderly bearing with each others failings, and so fulfilling the law of Christ. Thus, let parents, and children, masters and servants, meet together each

be absent on pretence of attending to my affairs. I have no affairs so interesting to me as the salvation of my domestics. I seriously forbid all injustice, which may cloak itself under a colour of serving me."—*Milner's Ch. Hist.*

day with one heart to magnify the name of God, and to confess that it is he who maketh them that dwell together in one house, to be thus united, and harmonious. Whilst all are looking forward according to the strength of their faith, to that place which Jesus is gone before to prepare for them ;— where, without any further trials, or any remaining corruption, they shall dwell together in love and joy, as one blessed family, in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

THE END.

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